

**Minutes of the Cheshire Governance Board
16 March 2007
The Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn**

PRESENT:

Martyn Bracegirdle	Connexions
Cllr Reg Chrimes	Ellesmere Port and Neston Borough Council
John Church	Western Cheshire Primary Care Trust
Cllr Rowland Domleo	Congleton Borough Council
Graham Dumbell	Job Centre Plus: Cheshire and Warrington
Cllr Paul Findlow (Chairman)	Cheshire County Council
Cllr Wesley Fitzgerald	Macclesfield Borough Council
Andrew Gurr	Learning and Skills Council
Cllr James Latham	Chester City Council
Cllr Brian Lloyd	Vale Royal Borough Council
Cllr Keith Musgrave	Vale Royal Borough Council
Cllr Margaret P Parker	Chester City Council
Roger Parkin	Cheshire Association of Local Councils
Cllr John Price	Chester City Council
Cllr Brian Silvester	Crewe and Nantwich Borough Council
Wendy Wright	Communities of Cheshire Partnership

IN ATTENDANCE:

Paul Ancell	Crewe and Nantwich Borough Council
Alison Armstrong	Cheshire County Council
Anne Bingham-Holmes	Vale Royal Borough Council
Jan Burns	Cheshire County Council
Gavin Butler	Cheshire County Council
Glyn Chambers	Congleton Borough Council
Sean Daley	Ellesmere Port & Neston Borough Council
Stephen Ewbank	Ellesmere Port and Neston Borough Council
Chris Hardy	Chester City Council
Helen Rowley	Macclesfield Borough Council
Jeremy Taylor	Cheshire County Council
Su Turner	Crewe and Nantwich Borough Council / LSP

APOLOGIES:

Nigel Burke	GONW
Bob Hodson	Cheshire Police Authority
Steve Moore	Environment Agency
Pauline Ong	Central and Eastern Cheshire PCT
Cllr Paul Roberts	Chester City Council (Cllr James Latham substitute)

1 WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS & NOTES OF LAST MEETING

The Chairman, Cllr Paul Findlow, opened the meeting by welcoming members. General introductions were made of all those present.

The Chairman took the Board through the notes of the last meeting which were **agreed** subject to the amendment of Cllr Brian Gaskill (Vale Royal Borough Council) to Cllr Malcolm Gaskill and the corrected spelling of Cllr Silvester's surname under the list of those present and agenda item 2.

2 CHESHIRE & WARRINGTON EMPLOYMENT & SKILLS BOARD – DRAFT PROPOSALS

Andrew Gurr introduced the paper outlining proposals for the creation of a new Cheshire & Warrington Employment and Skills Board as a sub-committee of the Cheshire & Warrington Economic Alliance. The new Board would operate as a long-term coordinator and advisory partnership responsible for the development and delivery of an integrated employment and skills strategy for the sub-region.

Members welcomed the strategic objectives though queried the resources available to support their achievement and the general operation of the new Board. Members also recognised the importance of and supported the new Board in lobbying on behalf of the sub-region.

AGREED: That the proposals be endorsed.

3 CHESHIRE LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT UPDATE

Gerry Budd updated members on the current position with regard to the preparation of the Cheshire Local Area Agreement. Specific attention was drawn to the current action planning activity to underpin each of the 54 sub outcomes and the amendments that had been made to the document as listed in Appendix A. It was also noted that the Cheshire Chief Executives had considered a paper at their last meeting outlining potential areas for investment from the second homes taxation funding identified by the Cheshire Local Government Association. No decision on the use of the funding had yet been made.

The Agreement, which was almost finalised, would be formally signed at a ceremony in London on 29 March. Invitations had been extended to a representative from each of the Cheshire local authorities with an additional place available for a representative of the Communities of Cheshire Partnership. Chester City Council and Congleton Borough Council confirmed their attendance at the official signing ceremony though it was planned to hold a local signing / celebration event for members of the Communities of Cheshire Partnership and Cheshire Governance Board. Thanks were again extended to all those involved in the formulation of the Agreement.

In discussion, reference was made to the importance of each district Local Strategic Partnership giving consideration to the delivery of the Agreement within their local area. Individual partners and partnerships would need to consider their contribution to the achievement of outcomes and scrutiny of the process.

Support was also expressed for investment in the voluntary, community and faith sector across Cheshire and the development of the 'hub' model for the ongoing engagement and involvement of the 'third sector' in the development and delivery of LAA outcomes.

4 AGENDA ITEM 4 - ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

Cllr Silvester highlighted the omission of specific targets to reduce anti social behaviour from the Local Area Agreement and requested the support of the Governance Board for their immediate inclusion.

It was noted that, within the narrative of the Agreement, the issue of anti social behaviour was reflected as a high priority across Cheshire. Further work on the identification of suitable targets was currently being carried out by the six Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships as part of the requirement to produce local action plans to address the RESPECT agenda. Once identified and agreed, they would be incorporated within the LAA.

AGREED: That the six CDRPs be encouraged to identify robust targets for the reduction of anti social behaviour in their area as part of their RESPECT action planning over the next few months.

5 DEVELOPING THE FUTURE ARRANGEMENTS FOR LOCAL AREA AGREEMENTS

Sean Daley briefed members on the Government's current thinking regarding the future arrangements for Local Area Agreements as reflected within the Local Government White Paper. The following points were highlighted:

- The current four blocks will be replaced by four themes, the key difference being a revision of "Economic Development and Enterprise" to "Economic Development and the Environment" (including culture).
- New LAAs will be influenced by and focused on the outcomes of the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) due to be announced in the autumn.
- A new national suite of approximately 200 performance indicators will be developed from which areas, in consultation and negotiation with Government, will identify up to 35 areas for improvement. These will be based on a performance and risk assessment against the achievement of the national outcomes. They will also, together with 18 statutory Department for Education and Skills attainment and childcare targets, form the new LAA.
- New LAAs will be mandatory with a statutory duty placed on an identified range of public sector partners to cooperate.
- It is expected that the new LAAs will be supported by all mainstream resources in the area with a specific shift away from ring-fenced funding.
- The current local authority inspection regimes will change with the LAA being at the heart of a new Comprehensive Area Assessment.

- New LAAs are expected to be in place across the country by April 2008.

Members expressed concern about local implications, Government expectations and the tight timetable for the development and negotiation of the new LAAs, particularly in the light of their dependence on the CSR announcement which was already likely to be delayed. Questions were also asked about the sanctions for compliance and the capacity of GONW to steer the LAA process.

AGREED: That, as a round 3 LAA area, appropriate representation be made to defer the introduction of a 'new' LAA in Cheshire pending the publication of more robust guidance and the new national indicator set following the CSR announcement and allowing sufficient time for proper partner engagement.

6 DATE OF NEXT MEETING AND 2007 SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS

AGREED: That the next meeting of the Cheshire Governance Board be held in Congleton at 1.00pm on 29.06.07.

Signed (Chair):

Date: