

Notes of meeting of Warwickshire Partnerships held at the North Warwickshire Borough Council's Offices at Atherstone on Monday 20 September, 2010.

Present

Members of the Partnership

Council Leaders:

Councillor Alan Farnell (Chair), Warwickshire County Council
Councillor Dennis Harvey, Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough Council
Councillor Colin Hayfield, North Warwickshire Borough Council
Councillor Craig Humphrey, (Vice-Chair) Rugby Borough Council
Councillor Stephen Gray, Stratford on Avon District Council

Voluntary & Community Sector - William Clemmey, Coventry and Warwickshire Infrastructure Consortium (CWIC)

Warwickshire Police Authority - Ian Francis, Chair of the Police Authority

Warwickshire Primary Care Trust - Bryan Stoten, Chair of Warwickshire PCT

Warwickshire and West Midlands Association of Local Councils (WALC) - Councillor William Lowe

Officers

Warwick District Council - Andrews Jones, Head of Revenues,
County Council - Simon Robson, Head of Partnerships
 - Pete Keeley, Democratic Services

1. Apologies for Absence

were received from Councillor Michael Doody, Leader of Warwick District Council and Louise Bennett of Coventry and Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce.

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

Councillor Craig Humphries indicated that minute 3(2)(c)(iv) relating to responsibilities for key priority areas for the Partnership in 2009-2010, showed him as being responsible for Rationalisation of Property whereas this should be Affordable Housing.

The Minutes were then agreed.

3. National Context Update from Partners

The Partnership noted that the four key priority areas that were to provide the focus for this meeting, had been overtaken by recent developments.

Bryan Stoten advised the Partnership of the main developments relating to the PCT including proposals for the establishment of a Department of Public Health in three years. The date of disbandment of the PCT had been extended to August 2013.

It was possible that the operation of the PCT would not appear very different over the next three years.

In response to comments about the need to continue to address issues relating to an aging population, he confirmed that “doing nothing” was not an option but regard must be had to the implications of the PCT having to reduce significantly the cost of continuing health care.

Ian Francis indicated that the Police were still waiting for details and guidance on key issues such as the directly elected commissioner and the establishment of police and crime panel. This would be included in a draft Bill to be published. He outlined the difficult financial situation the Force was in and the likely consequences of budget reductions on personnel levels.

With regard to further debate about the possible amalgamation of the Warwickshire and Coventry Police Forces, Ian outlined the history of the proposal and the reasons why it was now appropriate for the amalgamation to be back on the agenda. It was understood that the Coventry City Council had rejected this out of hand for several reasons including the funding issues that were being experienced by Warwickshire Police.

The Partnership had a brief discussion about the benefits of having a police presence in One Stop Shops although there was some concern that the inclusion of tax office representatives needed careful consideration.

The Partnership were advised that property rationalisation issues were being dealt with in many areas and was also being considered at meetings of Regional Leaders. Information on the property held by partner organisations would be shared as soon as possible bearing in mind the need for greater speed in reaching a conclusion.

The Chair confirmed that, along with Councillor Colin Hayfield, he would ensure that all partners would be involved in property rationalisation.

4. Future of Warwickshire Partnership

The Chair introduced the item and suggested that the original reasons for the establishment of the PSB no longer existed particularly since the establishment of the Warwickshire Leaders Board which had a similar agenda.

During the discussion the following points were noted:

- The need for quick action on any decision.
- Success of local forums showing that the devolution of power works.

- Any changes should have regard to the benefits of the current Partnership arrangements, including membership and size.
- The present arrangements should remain for the immediate future to enable discussions between organisations in the current climate.
- The future of CWSP Ltd was questionable.
- The need to have discussions on the costs of services and local provision.
- If include Coventry and Solihull in the current arrangements there would be a need to consider greater representation from the NHS and voluntary sector
- A great deal of activity on shared/partnership work was already being undertaken between partners behind the scenes. This included discussions with Coventry and Solihull.
- Work on property rationalisation and purchasing was taking place although possibly not at the desired pace.

In conclusion, the Partnership agreed that

- (1) A further meeting of the Partnership should be held bearing in mind the need to know the outcomes of various activities that were being undertaken currently.
- (2) The Chair be asked to prepare a draft structure for future partnership working having regard the comments expressed earlier, for consideration at the next meeting of the Partnership.

5. Any other business

None.

The meeting finished at 11.05