



**LONDON BOROUGH OF HILLINGDON**

**COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS AND ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY  
COMMITTEE**

**2005/06**

***WORKING OF THE LOCAL STRATEGIC  
PARTNERSHIP – HILLINGDON PARTNERS***

**Members of the Committee**

**Cllr Anthony Way (Chairman)  
Cllr Josephine Barrett  
Cllr Frank Filgate  
Cllr John Hensley  
Cllr John Major  
Cllr Richard Lewis  
Cllr Norman Nunn-Price**



## **CONTENTS**

<b>Chairman’s Foreword</b> .....	<b>Page i</b>
<b>1. Recommendations Summary</b> .....	<b>Page 1</b>
<b>2. Background, Terms of Reference and Methodology</b> .....	<b>Page 4</b>
<b>3. Summary and Conclusions</b> .....	<b>Page 7</b>
Appendix 1: LSP Membership .....	Page 17
Appendix 2: Local Area Agreement: what it is/how does it fit in? .....	Page 18
Appendix 3: Evidence summaries.....	Page 20
Appendix 4: Responses to the survey .....	Page 42



## Chairman's Foreword



As local Councillors we find that what most people want are joined up public services that deliver what they want, when they need it and in a way that they want it. Partnership between the Council, other public service providers, local businesses and the community and voluntary sector is vital to achieving this.

Hillingdon Partners – the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) - was set up in 2001. Five years on is a good time to take stock of what has been achieved and think about future development. As we say in the report, there is a positive story to tell about the partnership and it confirms what the Audit Commission's recent Comprehensive Performance Assessment says about the "widespread endorsement of its [the Council's] partnership working".

However as we heard from witnesses in Hillingdon there is room for improvement and development. Our recommendations focus on accountability, engagement, communication and future challenges, including the need to build more partnership working at neighbourhood level. We hope these will help the Council and the LSP continue to develop partnership working.

I would like to thank the Members of the Committee, all those who gave evidence to us or returned our questionnaire, and the officers who supported us – without whose co-operation this report would not have been possible.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anthony Way'.

Cllr Anthony Way

## 1. Recommendations Summary

This is a summary of all our recommendations as contained in part 3, which also provides the reasoning and conclusions behind them.

*On structure and processes:*

1. **Cabinet Members should become members of Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) theme groups that fall within their portfolios and be active in connecting Council strategy with the work of the Theme Groups.**
2. **The range and number of theme groups should be reviewed. Those that have not performed effectively should either be dropped or reconfigured. Consideration should be given to re-organising around the four blocks proposed for Local Area Agreements (see part 3) although not limited by these.**
3. **Two new theme groups should be set up – one on Land Transport and the other on Voluntary and Community Grants – with the aims we have outlined in part 3.**
4. **The theme groups for a Prosperous Borough and for Learning and Culture (or similar if theme groups are reorganised) should set up a joint task group to review the problems of, and recommend action on, skills shortages across the borough.**
5. **The LSP Executive must ensure cross-cutting issues are taken up by appropriate theme groups, and regularly monitor the functioning of the theme groups.**
6. **Each theme group should regularly monitor, review and benchmark its progress, and report on this to the LSP Executive.**
7. **As already recommended to Cabinet, in the context of the roll forward of Community Strategy targets, we should be moving to a much smaller number of shared targets (around 40) focused on delivery and well supported by the local community. This is something that should be brought in for the 2007/8 targets.**

*On accountability:*

8. **Accountability to the public and local communities needs to be strengthened – there needs to be an interactive, bottom-up mechanism for feeding through views and needs to the LSP and the theme groups. Three actions need to be taken to ensure this:**
  - a. **There should be a well-publicised and well-attended public scrutiny event on the Community Strategy once a year, following publication of performance against community-set targets;**
  - b. **Local level consultative bodies, similar to or using the People's Panels set up under the Neighbourhood**

**Partnership initiative, need to be encouraged to feed views to and receive feedback from theme groups and the full LSP. Local Councillors should be encouraged to become involved in these local bodies.**

- c. As the lead body on the LSP, the Council should be mandated to ensure officers take action on the above two points and should require a report on progress in autumn 2006.**
- 9. The Council's Overview and Scrutiny arrangements should be used to provide scrutiny of the LSP. This should be achieved by:
    - a. Quarterly reports from the LSP to an appropriate O&S committee, with the lead LSP Officer in attendance;**
    - b. The lead Cabinet Member for the LSP/Community Strategy and each of the theme group Chairmen attending a challenge session with an appropriate O&S Committee on an annual basis.****
  - 10. We welcome ODPM's proposals for a legislative foundation for LSPs and recommend the LSP and the Council support it, as it should secure engagement from the key local public agencies. It would also provide a stronger basis for holding the partnership to account. We also endorse the Audit Commission's recommendations of a formal partnership agreement, to be signed by all partners, which would provide a sound basis for voluntary engagement in advance of legislation.**

*On engagement and communications:*

- 11. The entire process of involving representatives in the LSP needs to be reviewed so that organisations that may have the interest and potential to contribute to the LSP are not missed. The path to membership needs to be open, transparent and reviewable.**
- 12. Community engagement needs to be strengthened by more localised partnership working, developed around the Local Area Agreements. The experience and success of the Neighbourhood Partnership Initiative and of local planning forums needs to be built on in this respect.**
- 13. Ward councillors need to develop a strong community leadership role, become engaged with and scrutinise local partnership. Support, especially training and information, needs to be provided to enable them to do this.**
- 14. A communication strategy needs to be developed and implemented for the LSP – to raise its profile and explain the benefits of partnership and how it meets public expectations.**
- 15. The LSP needs to have specific engagement and communication targets. Achievement on these areas should be measured in annual**

stakeholder and public surveys and benchmarked against best practice elsewhere.

16. Specific projects should be sought to engage young people with the LSP and partner organisations. An example might be sports development in parks, which experience reported to us in evidence indicates would interest young people but also have wider community benefit if young people at risk of committing anti-social behaviour are targeted.

*On practical support:*

17. The functions of new LSP support office should include promotion and communication; bidding and leveraging in funding; developing a good information base; and building partnership at local level.
18. We reiterate the recommendation we have already made to Cabinet that a small number of central posts – one for each of the 3 (constituency) safer neighbourhood areas to be created – are set up to co-ordinate and build the Council's ability to respond to the roll out of Safer Neighbourhoods. These posts should be modelled on the successful work done to date by Maggie Allen (seconded by Groundwork to the Council) and could be funded by using a proportion of the Public Service Agreement Reward Grant to the Council.

*On future challenges:*

19. The LSP should take on a major issue or project in the borough as a demonstration project of how it can make a difference to people's lives. An example might be local transport infrastructure.
20. The LSP needs to establish itself as a clearing-house for initiatives by partners that involve more than one partner. This needs to be done with the minimum of bureaucracy but with sufficient communication to cut down duplication and build co-operation.
21. Hillingdon should take advantage of being in the later wave of LAAs and examine best practice elsewhere, in order to guide plans. This could involve a major review by an appropriate Overview and Scrutiny committee undertaken in the first half of 2006/7 – collecting and assessing evidence from elsewhere, benchmarking, scrutinising Hillingdon's plans and making recommendations to Cabinet by October 2006.

*On these recommendations:*

22. That these recommendations, after consideration by Cabinet, should go to the full LSP.

## 2. Background, Terms of Reference and Methodology

### Aims of the Review

- To review the role of the LSP, its composition and accountability
- To review the delivery of Community Strategy targets and the impact on the community
- To make recommendations as appropriate to Cabinet and Council.

### Background and importance

1. The Council has a statutory responsibility under Local Government Act 2000 to produce a Community Strategy for the Borough in partnership with other local service providers and community representatives. The Council does this through a Local Strategic Partnership – Hillingdon Partners. LSPs are non-statutory, non-executive bodies that operate at a level that enables strategic decisions to be taken while being close enough to neighborhoods to allow actions to be determined at community level. Their purpose is to develop long-term strategies and plans for the local area and bring about effective change.<sup>1</sup>
2. Hillingdon Partners is central to the Council's partnership working. Established in 2001, it tackles issues such as crime, jobs, education, health and housing. It is a key means of the Council fulfilling its statutory community leadership role. The Partnership has produced a Community Strategy 2005-2015 that outlines priorities for the next 10 years, and sets targets for the current year and objectives for the next 3 years<sup>2</sup>. Public, private, community and voluntary sector organisations all have a part to play in improving quality of life, and these organisations are expected to work together, in the full partnership and in theme groups, to deliver the Community Strategy.
3. Hillingdon Partners membership is listed in Appendix 1.

### Rationale for this review

4. The Community Partnership and Economic Development Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) Committee decided to review the work of the LSP on 16<sup>th</sup> June 2005, in accordance with Hillingdon's standard criteria for selecting O&S reviews. Hillingdon's Co-ordinating O&S Committee subsequently approved this decision. The community planning process and the Community Strategy need to be widely understood both across the Council and externally. There needs also to be ownership of the process and strategy if effective services are to be delivered. There needs to be strong engagement in the Partnership and accountability, if services are to be geared to local community needs.

---

<sup>1</sup> *Local Strategic Partnerships*, Government Guidance, ODPM, March 2001.

<sup>2</sup> *Working together for a better future*, Hillingdon's Community Strategy 2005-2015, Hillingdon Partners, June 2005.



## Key questions (our Terms of Reference)

5. These are:

- The role of the LSP, its composition, accountability and scrutiny.
- The delivery of the Community Strategy targets and how these address the priorities of the community.
- Engagement with the community to influence the strategy
- Future development of the Partnership, its working arrangements and new initiatives such as neighbourhood partnerships, asset management, Local Development Frameworks and Local Area Agreements (Appendix 2 provides ODPM's explanation of what a Local Area Agreement is and how it might fit in to a council structure).

## Methodology

6. We took evidence in four sessions as shown in the table below. In addition all other LSP Partners were given the opportunity via a survey to give their views, although it was disappointing that representatives from only 3 partner organisations out of 16 partner organisations contacted did so by or very shortly after the deadline for returns. Summaries of the evidence and the questionnaire returns are in Appendices 3 and 4.

Meeting	Action	Milestone
19/09/05	Report by the Council's Policy Team on current position & background.	Framework set for the review
18/10/05	Witnesses: Rachel Davies, Tony Dunn & Peter Sale	Evidence on the LSP from the business and skills sector
22/11/05	Witnesses: Chris Commerford and Mick May	Evidence on the LSP from the voluntary and community sector
10/01/06	Witnesses: Chief Superintendent Toland, Sergeant Evans, Sergeant Hayes, Sue Curley, Maggie Allen and David Brough	Evidence on the LSP and the Neighbourhood Partnership Initiative

7. We reviewed a range of documentary evidence, including:

- Hillingdon Partners - *Structure, procedures and Working Protocols*.
- *The Working of Hillingdon Strategic Partnership* – Council's Policy Team note.
- ODPM/DfT *National Evaluation of Local Strategic Partnerships – Report on the 2004 survey of LSPs*; also the *Final Report, 2006*.
- Hillingdon's *Asset Management Strategy*.
- ODPM's *Evaluation of LSPs – Governance: A briefing note for LSPs by LSPs*.
- *London Borough of Croydon Strategic Partnership's business involvement* – good practice document on IDeA website.

- ODPM's LSP Delivery Toolkit *Involving the private sector: a practical guide*.
- *Compact for Hillingdon* – our compact with the voluntary and community sector.
- *Local Strategic Partnerships and the voluntary and community sector* – survey of good practice evidence by Hillingdon's Policy Team.
- Audit Commission Report *Governing Partnerships – bridging the accountability gap*, Oct 2005.
- ODPM Consultation Paper: *Local Strategic Partnerships: Shaping their Future*, Dec 2005.

### 3. Summary and Conclusions

1. Our review is timely. The Government are consulting about the future shape of LSPs, proposing that they should become the “partnership of partnerships” in an area, that they move from a process focus to a delivery focus and drive the effective delivery of Local Area Agreements when they come into being (planned for 2007 in Hillingdon).
2. At the same time there is recognition within Hillingdon that now is the time to take stock of progress on the LSP and Community Strategy and think about the way forward. In the words of the Cabinet Member for Performance, Partnership and Community Safety at Cabinet on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2006, the Community Strategy is at “a cross-roads”. Our conclusions and recommendations, we hope, will enable Cabinet and Council to take the right decisions in developing partnership working in Hillingdon.
3. Our review has sought views from a range of partners engaged with the Council, has looked at the new Neighbourhood Partnership initiative in order to investigate the potential of partnership at local level, has studied the Government’s proposals and sought innovative ideas from outside the borough. From this we have distilled the following summary and conclusions that concentrate on:
  - What the LSP has done well; where it has been less effective
  - Structures and processes
  - Accountability
  - Engagement and communication
  - Practical support - the place and function of the new LSP office
  - Future challenges.

**We have made recommendations throughout this part of the report and have brought these together and listed them again in part 1.**

#### **What the LSP has done well; where it has been less effective**

4. There is a positive story to tell about the LSP. In evidence to us, partners in the business, skills, voluntary and community sectors and those taking forward the Neighbourhood Partnership initiative felt Hillingdon Partners had established itself as a functioning network. However, there are areas that are felt to need development.
5. Hillingdon’s LSP is seen as being been **most effective** in providing a clear structure for connections between partners and acting as a forum for sharing information about individual partners’ policies. The Safer Neighbourhoods initiative is seen as the most successful partnership in terms of delivery and change. Compared with other LSPs, Hillingdon Partners are felt to be more cohesive and to have good senior Council Officer buy-in.

6. Where the LSP has been **least effective** is in securing engagement and recognition from the wider community, such as smaller businesses and local communities. It has not done as much as it could to facilitate joint action by partners, and it is not clear to some partners how they can have an impact on the bigger issues. Theme groups have also worked too much in isolation, although from last June representatives from each theme group have been meeting together to help overcome this.

### ***Our conclusions***

7. Widening engagement and communicating more with the public, and involving the public in making the LSP more accountable are key issues that we deal with in more detail later. Greater co-ordination is vital – instances were mentioned to us where initiatives have been poorly co-ordinated or partners have only been aware of them at a late stage, e.g. Street Scene. We return to this issue of greater co-ordination under “future challenges”.

### **Structure and processes**

8. The LSP is composed of the LSP Executive, the full partnership and seven theme groups covering:
  - A borough of learning and culture
  - A safe borough
  - A clean and attractive borough
  - A borough with improving health, housing and social care
  - A prosperous borough
  - A borough where opportunities are open to all
  - A borough where children and young people are healthy, safe and supported.
9. The LSP Executive’s membership is the Primary Care Trust’s Chief Executive, Borough Police Commander, Council Chief Executive, Cabinet Portfolio Holder and representatives of Brunel University and Ealing Family Housing. Its role is to help set the direction and agenda for the LSP, and it meets monthly, chaired by the Council’s Chief Executive.
10. The full LSP is composed of the chairs of all theme groups and up to three additional representatives from each theme group and representatives of a small number of community and voluntary sector organisations. Its role is to oversee production of the community plan and the development of the LSP. It meets 6 times a year, chaired by the Council’s Chief Executive.
11. The detailed terms of reference of the LSP, LSP Executive and theme partnerships, a structure chart and accountabilities are outlined in the Hillingdon Partners Protocols – *Structures, Procedures and Working Protocols for the Local Strategic Partnership*.<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup> Not published but available on request from the Council’s Policy Team - contact Paul Williams or Lorraine O’Dea.

## ***Our conclusions***

12. This is a complicated structure, which works well in parts but in other ways leaves gaps and is not well suited to an LSP moving to more of a delivery focus. There is no direct link between Cabinet portfolio holders or other party representatives and the theme groups, so that theme groups are not plugged into the Council's own processes for strategy development.
13. Several partners suggested to us that the LSP could and should be taking more of the bigger cross-cutting issues forward e.g. seeking improvements to land transport infrastructure, considering skill shortages arising from new employers coming into the borough and devising solutions. These are important issues where a *collective* approach to negotiations with regional and sub-regional bodies, such as Transport for London and the West London Learning and Skills Council, or with major employers could pay dividends.
14. Representatives from the voluntary sector suggested that through the LSP the larger voluntary and community groups could help smaller voluntary and community organisations in the borough – for example to develop proposals, bid for money and share assets - and might be able to lever in extra funds to help across the borough. This could be the function of a new LSP grants group.
15. We are also concerned about the large number of targets currently within the Community Strategy. There were 190 targets for 2005/6 and appear to be about the same number for 2006/7. This myriad of targets – rolled forward, in our view, without much attention as to whether these are what the community still wants, to where we have got to already or whether these reduce duplication – is not helpful. We recommend a move to a smaller, sharper and more focused set of targets.
16. The recent ODPM consultation proposes that Local Area Agreements (LAAs) should put LSPs at the centre of negotiation, delivery and monitoring of priority outcomes in a local area. ODPM indicate most LAAs have been focused around four blocks - Safer and Stronger Communities; Children and Young People; Healthier Communities and Older People; and Economic Development and Enterprise – and that some areas have reorganised their partnerships around these. We recommend that a review of the theme groups should consider, but not be limited by, this proposal.

## ***Recommendations***

### **We recommend that:**

1. **Cabinet Members should become members of theme groups that fall within their portfolios and be active in connecting Council strategy with the work of the Theme Groups.**
2. **The range and number of Theme Groups should be reviewed. Those that have not performed effectively should either be dropped or**

reconfigured. Consideration should be given to re-organising around the four blocks proposed for Local Area Agreements (see above), although not limited by these.

3. **Two new theme groups should be set up – one on Land Transport and the other on Voluntary and Community Grants – with the aims we have outlined above.** (We have deliberately said *land* transport as we otherwise see the group being swamped by Heathrow issues and unable to make progress on much needed improvements such as the bus/tube interchange at Uxbridge, extension of the Central line. Heathrow warrants separate consideration.)
4. **The theme groups for a Prosperous Borough and for Learning and Culture (or similar if theme groups are reorganised) should be set up a joint task group to review the problems of, and recommend action on, skills shortages across the borough.**
5. **The LSP Executive must ensure cross-cutting issues are taken up by appropriate theme groups, and regularly monitor the functioning of the theme groups.**
6. **Each theme group should regularly monitor, review and benchmark its progress and report on this to the LSP Executive.**
7. **As already recommended to Cabinet, in the context of the roll forward of Community Strategy targets, we should be moving to a much smaller number of shared targets (around 40) focused on delivery and well supported by the local community. This is something that should be brought in for the 2007/8 targets.**

### **Accountability**

17. We were told that the full LSP is currently accountable to:
  - The public through consultation
  - Partners by delivering the actions agreed in the Community Strategy
  - Theme groups for support, advice, guidance, feed back and, where appropriate, brokerage
  - Existing decision-making bodies such as the Council and the Primary Care Trust for budgets and budget management
18. The LSP Executive is accountable to
  - The full LSP for demonstrating leadership in the development of the community planning process
19. Theme Groups are accountable to
  - Their members for the development of their theme and making recommendations to the LSP
  - The full LSP for reporting progress

- The community and Partners' executive bodies for the delivery of their theme.

### ***Our conclusions***

20. These arrangements have two main weaknesses. First, there has been in practice little accountability to the public and local communities – a point accepted by most of those we heard from. Few people outside the LSP are aware of what it does, feel consulted by it or would know how to put their views forward to it. Officers told us that the main way they have tried to involve the wider community is through a community conference that has been held periodically over several years.
21. The second weakness is that these arrangements lack a democratic scrutiny mechanism for overseeing the work of the LSP. Without public input or scrutiny of this work there is an element of tangible or perceived over-reliance on self-evaluation by the LSP.
22. The recent ODPM consultation suggests Council Overview and Scrutiny Committees have often not been used to best effect in relation to LSPs. We feel this is the case in Hillingdon and make a specific recommendation to cover this.
23. We also feel that greater commitment needs to be obtained from the Council and its partners if effective delivery is to become the main task of the LSP. We therefore endorse the proposal mentioned in the ODPM consultation (in paragraph 72) and recommended in the Audit Commission's report on "Governing Partnerships" that a formal partnership agreement – covering the role, membership, responsibilities and accountability of Partners – is created and signed up to by all partners. We also endorse the ODPM's proposal for a legislative foundation for LSPs that would place a duty to co-operate with the local authority on other public sector agencies.

### ***Recommendations***

8. **Accountability to the public and local communities needs to be strengthened – there needs to be an interactive, bottom-up mechanism for feeding through views and needs to the LSP and the theme groups. Three actions need to be taken to ensure this:**
  - a. **There should be a well-publicised and well-attended public scrutiny event on the Community Strategy once a year, following publication of performance against community-set targets;**
  - b. **Local level consultative bodies, similar to or using the People's Panels set up under the Neighbourhood Partnership initiative, need to be encouraged to feed views to and receive feedback from theme groups and the full LSP. Local Councillors should be encouraged to become involved in these local bodies.**





from a representative of the Uxbridge People's Panel this had galvanised local people. We were also impressed by the actions of local SNTs in bringing Council officers out from their desks to witness problems and commit to joint action to solve them. This highlighted the need for a more responsive, even proactive council, and for central resources to co-ordinate that action.

27. It was also brought home to us, in our session with voluntary and community sector representatives, that the LSP is largely unknown and unappreciated outside of those directly involved. It was suggested that the LSP should do more to communicate what partnership can achieve – for example through human-interest stories in posters; LSP branding; publicising contact and access points, etc – to show how working together can change people's lives.
28. There is a need to do this in particular with young people – the next generation. Whilst Partners have a desire to engage them and raise aspirations, those we heard from acknowledged that this is not easy to do. As one witness said, they do not buy into targets. The LSP might try targeting communications at them, arranging attractive ways of bringing young people in to talk to them and identify projects that engage them. An example could be sports and physical activity projects since some LSP partners are already involved in sports development at a sub regional level. The important thing is not just to provide for young people but also to involve young people in the process of planning projects and services.

### ***Our conclusions***

29. Engagement and communications should be key development areas for the LSP. Communicating the potential of partnership, engaging young people and widening understanding of the Local Strategic Partnership need attention over the next year. There is an acknowledgement among partners that more needs to be done.
30. Even organisations closely involved with the Council do not know how they might become more involved in the LSP, suggesting that the LSP may be losing out on potential resources. We did not find any clear mechanism for applying to join the LSP, the LSP executive or the theme groups. The LSP Protocols refer to membership being by invitation.
31. The LSP Executive might consider setting maximum terms of membership of the LSP before re-election or reappointment, to provide the flexibility to change and refresh the membership. Some key interests, e.g. youth, sports organisations, small and medium-sized organisations, are not currently well represented or engaged.
32. The experience of the Neighbourhood Partnerships should be taken on board in developing arrangements to support the proposed Local Area Agreement. Local planning forums set up by Planning and Transportation

Group are another good example of how wider engagement can be achieved.

33. We also see local Councillors as having a key part to play in engagement and communication. As community leaders, they need to be involved with ward-level consultative bodies and in shaping and scrutinising the Local Area Agreement and partnership working at a local level.
34. We note the appointment of a new Head of Communications for the Council and that a sub-group of officers reporting to the LSP that has recently been set up to develop a communications strategy.

### ***Recommendations***

11. **The entire process of involving representatives in the LSP needs to be reviewed so that organisations that may have the interest and potential to contribute to the LSP are not missed. The path to membership needs to be open, transparent and reviewable.**
12. **Community engagement needs to be strengthened by more localised partnership working, developed around the Local Area Agreement. The experience and success of the Neighbourhood Partnership Initiative and of local planning forums needs to be built on in this respect.**
13. **Ward councillors need to develop a strong community leadership role, become engaged with and scrutinise local partnership. Support, especially training and information, needs to be provided to enable them to do this.**
14. **A communication strategy needs to be developed and implemented for the LSP – to raise its profile and explain the benefits of partnership and how it meets public expectations.**
15. **The LSP needs to have specific engagement and communication targets. Achievement on these areas should be measured in annual stakeholder and public surveys and benchmarked against good practice elsewhere.**
16. **Specific projects should be sought to engage young people with the LSP and partner organisations. An example might be sports development in parks, which experience reported to us in evidence indicates would interest young people but also have wider community benefit if young people at risk of committing anti-social behaviour are targeted.**

## **Practical Support**

35. Two Council Officers – a Policy Advisor and a Senior Policy Officer, have up to now supported Hillingdon Partners part-time. We have been told that, from April, there will be funding for an independent LSP office with 2 full-time staff – a lead officer and administrative support. We sought views on where this should be placed and what this should do.

## ***Our conclusions***

36. The planned LSP support office is welcome – but what is important is not so much where it is situated but what it does. Roles suggested are promotion and communication; bidding and levering in funding; and developing a good information base.

37. Information sharing is seen as having the potential to develop further – there is plenty of information around but it needs a dedicated resource to assess it, map it and disseminate it.

38. The LSP Office needs to have a role in supporting the overarching LSP and its theme groups and become a link with and information resource to local area partnerships.

39. The experience of the Neighbourhood Partnership is that co-ordinators are also needed centrally within the Council to ensure partnership working happens and action is delivered.

## ***Recommendations***

**17. The functions of new LSP support office should include promotion and communication; bidding and levering in funding; developing a good information base; and building partnership at local level.**

**18. We reiterate the recommendation we have already made to Cabinet that a small number of central posts – one for each of the three safer neighbourhood areas to be created – are set up to co-ordinate and build the Council's ability to respond to the roll out of Safer Neighbourhoods. These posts should be modelled on the successful work done to date by Maggie Allen (seconded by Groundwork to the Council) and could be funded by using a proportion of the Public Service Agreement Reward Grant to the Council.**

## **Future Challenges**

40. The LSP will need to take account of a variety of major changes and developments in the borough, e.g. the expansion of Heathrow, the new Local Development Framework, the redevelopment of RAF Uxbridge, demographic changes, the growing range of service providers, more

businesses wanting to come into the borough. The partners who gave us their views were all conscious of these and aware that, up to now, the LSP had not grappled with the bigger issues.

41. One view put to us was that it was not clear how theme groups could have a meaningful impact on big issues like the 10 Year Transport Strategy or Heathrow. Concentrating on smaller things – like graffiti or dog mess – offered more scope for doing something of benefit to the community.
42. We have already commented on the need to prepare for the Local Area Agreement (LAA). Being in the later wave of Councils to introduce an LAA, Hillingdon has the opportunity to examine experience elsewhere and build on what has worked best. Overview and Scrutiny can assist and add value to this process of policy development.

### ***Our conclusions***

43. We feel the LSP should tackle some of the larger issues that face the borough but understand LSP members concerns about doing this. These can be overcome by a focused and limited approach – working on only one or two bigger issues - and better guidance and support for LSP members. This might come out of a demonstration project. There is a role for the LSP to become an effective lobbying organisation.
44. Preparing for the LAA should be one focus over the coming year, and we make specific recommendations on this.
45. There should also be a stronger future role for the LSP in acting as a check on duplication and an encouraging co-operation. It should do this by acting as a route for clearance on local partnership initiatives and encouraging and facilitating the greater exchange of plans.

### ***Recommendations***

- 19. The LSP should take on a major issue or project in the borough as a demonstration project of how it can make a difference to people's lives. An example might be local transport infrastructure.**
- 20. The LSP needs to establish itself as a clearing-house for initiatives by partners that involve more than one partner. This needs to be done with the minimum of bureaucracy but with sufficient communication to cut down duplication and build co-operation.**
- 21. Hillingdon should take advantage of being in the later wave of LAAs and examine best practice elsewhere in order to guide plans. This could involve a major review by an appropriate Overview and Scrutiny committee undertaken in the first half of 2006/7 – collecting and assessing evidence from elsewhere, benchmarking, scrutinising Hillingdon's plans and making recommendations to Cabinet by Sept/Oct 2006.**

## **Appendix 1: List of Hillingdon Partner Member Organisations**

BAA (Heathrow Airport Ltd)  
Brunel University  
Chimes Shopping Centre  
Disablement Association Hillingdon  
Ealing Family Housing  
Groundwork Trust  
Hillingdon Association of Voluntary Services (HAVS)  
Hillingdon Council  
Hillingdon Chamber of Commerce  
Hillingdon Fire Service  
Hillingdon Muslim Council  
Hillingdon REC  
Jobcentre Plus  
Metropolitan Police  
London Borough of Hillingdon  
Pavilions Shopping Centre  
Primary Care Trust  
Hillingdon Hospital NHS Trust  
Pensions Service  
West London Learning and Skills Council

## **Appendix 2: Local Area Agreement – what it is/how does it fit in with Council structures?**

ODPM explain Local Area Agreements as follows:

- Local Area Agreements (LAAs) simplify the number of additional funding streams from central government going into an area, help join up public services more effectively and allow greater flexibility for local solutions to local circumstances.
- They will be agreements struck between Government, the local authority and its major delivery partners in an area (working through the Local Strategic Partnerships). They will be structured around three or four blocks, e.g. children and young people, safer and stronger communities, and healthier communities and older people.
- LAAs will help devolve decision making, move away from a 'Whitehall knows best' philosophy and reduce bureaucracy. Also, they are one of the first products of the Government's 10 Year Vision strategy.
- LAAs will be driven through by the local authority in partnership with the local strategic partnership (to ensure engagement of local partners). Negotiations will be overseen by the respective Government Office and signed off by ministers.
- Pilot Local Area Agreements are now underway in 21 areas. A further pilot phase of 40 agreements are to be in place by April 2006.

The following page contains diagrams from ODPM's consultation "*Local Strategic Partnerships: shaping their future*" showing how the Local Area Agreement might fit into a council's structure.

Figure 1: Unitary & County LSP Framework

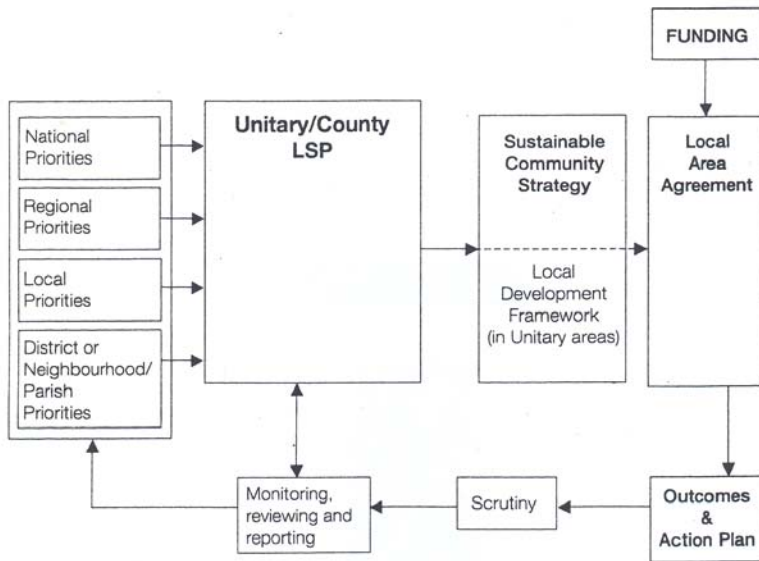


Figure 3: The relationship between Sustainable Community Strategies, Local Area Agreements and local action planning



19.

## APPENDIX 3: SUMMARIES OF EVIDENCE AT MEETINGS ON 18 OCTOBER 2005, 22 NOVEMBER 2005 AND 10 JANUARY 2006.

### Community Partnerships and Economic Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Review of the Working of the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP)

#### 18<sup>th</sup> October 2005

#### Summary of evidence from:

- **Rachel Davies**, Vice-Chair of Hillingdon Chamber of Commerce and Principal of Uxbridge College – denoted by RD below.
- **Tony Dunn**, Manager of Chimes Shopping Centre – denoted by TD below.
- **Peter Sale**, Manager, Hillingdon Education Business Partnership, BA Community Learning Centre.

#### Rachel Davies (RD) and Tony Dunn (TD):

Questions and key points are picked out in bold, for ease of reference.

1. Please tell the Committee about your organisation and your involvement with the LSP?

RD explained she was invited by Mike Langan to attend tonight in her role as Vice-Chair of the Hillingdon Chamber of Commerce, which covered all aspects and parts of the borough.

TD said is manager of Chimes Shopping Centre and they see themselves as an integral part of the community. Chimes is one of ten shopping centres in the Capital Shopping Centres group, part of Liberty International – one of the London Stock Exchange's top 100 shares.

Both are members of the LSP.

2. In your opinion, where has the LSP been most effective so far? And where has it been less effective?

#### **Most effective:**

RD said that in her personal view **the LSP had been most effective in sharing information about roles and activities**, especially between public sector partners, and so extended understanding of what is happening in the borough.

TD agreed that the interchange of information had been successful, especially over security issues. **Interaction with the Safer**



**Neighbourhood group had enabled the LSP and him to reach out and make connections in relation to the town centre.** RD agreed that a common linkage for many partners is with the police.

RD also felt that **Hillingdon Chamber of Commerce had benefited from being involved with economic development issues, especially around Heathrow.** Overall the LSP had increased dialogue.

**Least effective:**

TD said **the LSP needs to draw more businesses in** and questioned whether currently it is a true representation of business in the borough. RD agreed but questioned whether bring in more people might make discussions tedious and unwieldy.

RD thought **a role for the LSP could be more facilitation of discussions in other fora.**

**Small businesses were the largest in number both in the borough and nationally but feel ignored.** Problems of rating for small businesses and the difficulties of attracting individual rather than cloned retailers into the town centre were discussed.

**3. *How can a Council best work together with its business partners and with its other partners?***

TD described how **transport issues are a problem in the town centre**, both insufficient car parking - which they are addressing - but also an inadequate bus terminal. They have discussed this in the LSP and **as a group could take it forward with TfL – this is one of the good things about the LSP.**

Several members of the Committee supported this. The bus interchange centre in Uxbridge is not attractive and is said to be about 60% overcapacity already so that requests to increase the number of buses cannot be met. There was also support for extending the Central line through to Uxbridge. Only a 50 metres piece of track would be needed.

RD felt that **as a partnership they could be more influential.** On transport issues, they had had information but might use some of their time to agree transport priorities and take these up with TfL. Paul Williams (Policy Officer for the LSP) mentioned that the Chief Executive has asked for a seminar on transport and one of the issues is taking matters to TfL.

**Asked whether they had felt involved in the preparation of and felt ownership of Hillingdon's Community Plan, both RD and TD agreed they did.** RD felt that they had spent long hours putting strategies together and were not sure what happens to them after.

**Not all partners might share their sense of ownership.** TD felt if the Council wanted greater involvement it could consult more widely but market research showed that for every 100 contacted, only 2 or 3 responded.

Asked about the call on their time from LSP work, TD felt **you had to be selective in what you could get involved with.** It would have been impractical to print off all the documents for the LSP meeting that morning. RD agreed that you had to prioritise **but the value of the LSP is that it gives you an insight into and opportunity to influence strategies that you might not otherwise, e.g. the Local Development Framework** that was taken at the LSP meeting this morning.

**4. *Have you any views on how the LSP could ensure that the full benefits are obtained from sharing data and information between partners?***

RD felt there was **a strong commitment to share information and to make it more usable by partners.**

Paul Williams said they had a plethora of information, increasingly available on a locality basis, and the trick in relation to data sharing is how to share and stay within data protection rules.

**5. *What do you think should be the role of the LSP in raising the aspirations of young people?***

TD felt it was **important to engage with young people but they needed to see the process and results.** If the LSP managed to involve them, it might take their engagement a stage further.

RD suggested that **the partners not just the LSP could do more to raise the aspirations of young people.** The LSP could encourage this. Hillingdon Chamber of Commerce, for example, could do more. But as a College Principal, she felt it was not just about aspirations, **the LSP should be concerned more about adult education and achievement.** Whilst there was strong co-ordination of the 14-19 issues through a Borough-led strategy group **there was a lack of oversight over the whole the whole adult skills and education provision.** There was a tendency for the LSP to see this area simply in terms of adult education when in fact there was a far greater range of need and provision in further education, private trainers and indeed in employers. Currently the LSP focus on this area was very limited. **No one group is co-ordinating action on this so it could a role for the LSP.**

Asked whether young people had been invited to the LSP, RD thought they had. Paul Williams said that at their **last 2 community conferences they had made special efforts to bring in young people and there had been, for example, 2 tables for them at the last Community Conference.** There is also a Youth Parliament in the Borough. But the time when the LSP meets (daytime) makes involving young people difficult. Today at the LSP meeting, they had a presentation relating to youth issues from Maggie Allen.

Asked about impending skill shortages and the need to encourage employers to get involved with modern apprenticeships, RD said she thought the **Hillingdon Chamber of Commerce had a responsibility to encourage employers to take skill shortages and training seriously.** But other problems contributed to local shortages, such as house prices. Also young people often lacked basic skills. Training and the range of qualifications on offer are poorly understood and vocational courses were only now being given the recognition they deserved. **But she questioned whether the LSP is a good forum for taking forward these vocational training issues. Whilst the LSP can give a general steer on borough training requirement, these are for relevant sectors to discuss and too specific for the LSP.**

Asked about outreach meetings, e.g. on campus, both RD and TD thought these a good idea but **the challenge is to keep interest in young people going. The LSP needs to think about structure and what will motivate them.**

In response to a question, RD said **there is a role for business to engage more with schools to advise young people of the challenges and opportunities ahead. The LSP could encourage this.** It could be difficult to change negative cultures but rewarding. TD supported this but felt we needed to continually bash at businesses' door to remind them to do this. They have to see something in it for them. He particularly **supported the idea of encouraging business people to become school governors.**

RD said there are **areas of educational deprivation within an overall economically prosperous borough and issues of literacy and language remained an issue for schools and educators of young people.** The issues were exacerbated by the number of new refugees and asylum seekers in the Borough although literacy and numeracy are a priority for native speakers as well.

**6. *What steps could the LSP take to ensure wider involvement in its work?***

These issues had been covered in responses to the questions above.

7. ***Some people say there is a “democratic deficit” in the way the LSP operates currently? Have you any views on this? For example is it reasonable that the LSP audits itself in relation to its own targets?***

RD didn't feel this. **The LSP is not just the Council, also it is there to facilitate and not just do things itself.** Independent bodies sometimes audit partners.

TD felt that **a problem was that no-one had the LSP as their main job – there was no ‘king of the LSP’.** This made it harder to promote the LSP's work to the public.

Paul Williams said the LSP's terms of reference make clear it is accountable to the community, but **that community involvement needed to be extended. The answer to this might be to make its focus more local** but this would take time and energy. RD agreed that it is important to get local businesses engaged with local communities.

8. ***If funding became available for an LSP office where would this be best placed - in the Council, with one of the Partners or in some other arrangement?***

RD said an LSP office would only work if it was in the Council but the key question was what its role would be. TD said that there might be merit in having it external to the Council – to improve democracy and champion effectively.

Paul Williams said there would be an independent LSP support office when PSA reward money came through, but it would probably be housed in Civic. Asked how this could be independent, Paul responded that the office would work to the LSP Chairman, currently the Chief Executive of the Council but there could be a revolving Chairman's post.

9. ***Does the LSP need to focus on fewer priorities – is its current approach making it difficult for people to relate to it?***

Neither RD nor TD thought this. TD said they already have theme groups but these bring matters back to a central core. It is important to have central co-ordination to keep control and give direction.

10. ***In your opinion, what major changes coming up in the Borough are likely to have an impact on future LSP priorities and/or the way the partnership works?***

RD stressed the changing nature of the borough, with major changes such as **Heathrow, transport plans**, etc. These are being addressed. TD mentioned **the Local Development Framework**, which the LSP is addressing. **Terminal 5 and the 3<sup>rd</sup> runway** are also major issues, as is **the sale and redevelopment of the RAF base** in Uxbridge. Paul Williams thought it would be beneficial if the LSP could get involved with what might go on the site.

- Q11. ***In what ways do you think businesses in Hillingdon could contribute to the LSP's continued development? Are there ways you feel you could contribute to the LSP's continued development?***

RD said it should **engage more businesses** and **have more discussion about what is going to happen** – transport, skill shortages, etc. **A more localised aspect to the LSP** would help.

TD agreed with **engaging as many businesses as possible to share the load, also to encourage the retention of skills in the local area.**

In response to a question about business representation on the LSP Executive, Paul Williams said the LSP Executive has representations from all Theme groups, with the Chief Executive representing the Prosperous Borough Theme. However, not all aspects of the business covered by the themes is fully covered yet.

#### **Summary of evidence from:**

**Peter Sale**, Manager, Hillingdon Education Business Partnership, BA Community Learning Centre:

**Questions and key points are picked out in bold, for ease of reference.**

- Q1. ***Please tell the Committee about the work of the Hillingdon Education Business Partnership?***

This is two organisations – Hillingdon Education Business Partnership and Hillingdon Training Ltd - which co-exist and work together.

**Hillingdon Education Business Partnership (EBP)** is well established. It operates as a trading company and supports schools

by encouraging businesses to work with them, e.g. through industry conferences, teachers in industry, school links, etc. Funding comes from the Learning and Skills Council. It is linked into a West London Consortium of 5 business partnerships covering 6 Local Authority areas.

**Hillingdon Training Ltd (HTL)** provides a range of training including apprenticeships, early years care, sports and recreation, basic skills, E2E, etc. E2E caters for youngsters with few qualifications, often combined with low self-esteem. Hillingdon has more of these than any other London Borough (about 6,000). E2E has been running for 14 months as a roll on, roll off programme, where trainees take part for between 6 weeks up to 1 year, and come from Hillingdon and other boroughs. HTL also provides young apprenticeships for those still at school that come part-time. They work with both special and other schools. The number of learners registered with HTL has trebled in the last 12 months – from 40 to 120.

**Q2. *How can a Council best work together with its business partners and with its other partners?***

Peter said he is in agreement with some of the things said earlier. **The Business Forum is a positive development** – the borough engaging with both usual and unusual partners. A number of new business partners are coming on board.

**A strategic approach to engaging business is crucial.** The EBP works with 500 business partners but they target how they used – they do not ask them all for the same things and certainly do not start by asking them for money. Other things they have to offer – expertise, school links or visits – are more valuable.

**A structured approach plus non-duplication is important** - too many people ask businesses for the same thing, e.g. mentors, where several organisations may be approaching businesses for these. Peter said he is talking to the Business Forum (BF) to ensure EBP and BF do not duplicate what they do.

Peter feels **there is a role for the LSP in co-ordination but does not want an extra tier that people have to go through.**

**Q3. *What involvement do you have or have you had with the Local Strategic Partnership?***

Peter said he had had more involvement with the 14-19 Forum and 14-19 Strategy Group than the LSP. He **agreed with what had been said earlier about the separation of the 14-19 Group and the opportunity for more co-ordination (see Q5 earlier).**

**Q4. Where do you feel it has been most effective? Where has it been less effective?**

Peter agreed that **the sharing of information is crucial** and that, even apart from the 14-19 group, **communication was not all it could be.**

In general there are **too many plans, too many strategies** - you can feel a bit lost in all of these.

**Q5. Is there anything LSP members could do to support the type of service provided by HEBP?**

Peter said the biggest help would be **building relationships and helping to avoid too many bodies doing their own thing.** By combining resources, partnership can take stronger action and reduce duplication. There is scope for better opportunities for working together.

**Q6. In your opinion are the Council and its Partners doing enough to raise the aspirations of young people in the borough?**

**Work-related learning is important, with the right balance between academic and vocational study.** This needs to be structured with and involve employers.

It was too easy to say that businesses were not doing enough but they will do if provision is structured correctly. There are too many initiatives and this drives businesses away. The best approach is to get businesses to work with schools.

**Q7. In your opinion could the LSP do more to promote its objectives and engage with young people?**

**The LSP could do more to promote partnership, for example around training.** It could encourage “**vocational hubs**” around the borough, but this will not work if it only involves some partners and not others.

**Q8. If extra staff resources were to become available to take forward partnership working, where could they be used most effectively – within the Council or within Partner organisations or in some other arrangement?**

**Peter said he found Tony Dunn’s response interesting. But he believed that the strength of the partnership comes from strong partners working together and from how it is used and works, rather than where people sit. In the EBP they haven’t gone for**

***autonomy but they do have flexibility – the ability to react quickly is important.***

**Q9. *Do you have views on how can the Local Strategic Partnership do more to ensure the full benefits are obtained from sharing information/data?***

**Sharing data and pooling ideas is essential – this goes wider than businesses, but they need to be part of it.**

**Q10. *Could the Local Strategic Partnership do more to encourage wider involvement with its work?***

In the Business Forum, a number of businesses say they want to work with others but don't want to jump in too quickly. **Sharing information is a way of starting involvement.**

**Q11. *In your opinion, what major changes coming up in the Borough are likely to have an impact on the way the partnership works?***

1% of GDP of the Borough's GDP is generated at Heathrow so **T5** is important - will generate a lot of retail opportunities.

**Businesses wanting to come into the Borough – it is important to tap into them earlier.** Peter agreed that the LSP could have an enabling role in this. For example there was a substantial job of work to do around the training needs of new businesses.

Agreed as a correct record by Rachel Davies, Tony Dunn and Peter Sale,  
3/11/05



## Community Partnerships and Economic Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Review of the Working of the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP)

**22 November 2005**

**Summary of evidence from:**

- **Chris Commerford**, Age Concern Hillingdon
  - **Mick May**, Groundwork Trust
- with advice from Paul Williams, Policy Advisor LBH.

**Questions and key points are picked out in bold, for ease of reference.**

1. ***Please tell the Committee about your organisation and your involvement with the LSP?***

**Chris Commerford (CC)** explained that **Age Concern Hillingdon** is a borough-wide voluntary organisation providing a wide range of services mainly to those aged 60 or more. They have 36 staff (many part-time) and 186 volunteers. New ventures include a multi-cultural lunch club just opened in Hayes and an active ageing project in Ruislip Manor based on a successful project in Hayes. Their biggest challenge is finding new premises. Money from Futurebuilders is going towards a new building and they are looking for premises where they can also hold activities. Chris is a member of the Council's Old Age and Carers Groups but not a member of the LSP. Elections were held to select voluntary sector representatives on the LSP and at the time she did not put herself forward. She might be interested in the future.

**Mick May (MM)** said that **Groundwork Trust** is an environmental regeneration body started 15-20 years ago. The Council is a company member of the Trust. Groundwork has done work in the Colne Valley and in some of the more deprived neighbourhoods, and works with schools. Groundwork is funding the Safer Neighbourhoods Partnership Manager seconded to Hillingdon. Future plans include a West London Floating Classroom for which they have funding for 3 posts for 5 years. Mick is involved with the LSP - as a member, as Chair of the Cleaner and More Pleasant Borough Theme group and as a LSP executive member.

2. ***In your opinion, where has the LSP been most effective so far? And where has it been less effective?***

**Most effective:**

MM said that in his experience, and his remit went wider than one borough, Hillingdon's LSP is **a cohesive group, more so than some**. Some would say **one of the big successes is the safer localities initiative**. Compared to other LSPs, he thought that the

**LSP here said clearly what it would do and had senior officer buy-in.**

CC liked **the systematic way of working, with a peer structure and clear channels.** This helped communication and showed how things could be progressed upwards. The LSP also created **an opportunity to deal with cross-cutting themes** such as equalities.

**Least effective:**

MM said it was not clear how his group could have **a meaningful impact on big issues** like the 10 Year Transport Strategy or Heathrow. Concentrating on smaller things – like graffiti or dog mess – offered more scope for doing something to benefit the community. If theme groups are expected to have an influence on bigger issues, then more work needs to be done on how they can do this.

Paul Williams informed the Committee that a Transport Theme Group had been considered but they had decided against. Heathrow, however, was mentioned in three of the Theme groups, was currently part of a consultancy study and regularly reported to the full LSP, e.g. the consultancy report was on the agenda for December.

Both MM and CC agreed that it would be good if achievements could be fed back to more people in the community, e.g. through posters.

Cllr Lewis asked for CC's views on the appointment of Hillingdon's Older People's Champion. She felt this was excellent and well received, but that disabled and mental health groups might feel a bit envious. She said personal communication was important and mentioned their information sharing/networking meetings for older people. They would be delighted if the Older People's Champion came to one.

**3. *How can a Council best work together with its voluntary and community partners and with its other partners?***

CC said **sharing information, planning and reviewing together** is important. Here it is good but could be better. For example she had first heard about the Older People's Champion and related funding from the local paper before being contacted by the Council team. The Chairman suggested they might make a recommendation about **communication**, especially around funding opportunities.

Cllr Barrett asked how Age Concern found out about the older people's issues covered in the Gazette's information page. CC said people didn't tend to write but they monitored calls – on the phone and in person – to find out where advice was needed, e.g. on getting a passport or setting up a bank account.

MM urged the Council to **use voluntary organisations to deliver services**. He thought the Council had bought into this idea but it would be good to see social enterprises encouraged and awarded more contracts. An example of difficulties for social enterprises is the graffiti contract – his organisation had been employing ex-prisoners for years who would be ideal for this (giving something back to the community) but when the contract went out to tender the size of the labour force and capital investment required, along with clearance times, ruled out a bid.

Cllr Lewis asked for views on the amount of **communication** from the Council. MM said this was sometimes too much and sometimes not enough. There was agreement that it **could be better targeted**.

4. ***Have you any views on how the LSP could ensure that the full benefits are obtained from sharing data and information between partners?***
5. ***What is the best way for the Council to share information about its activities and plans with the voluntary and community sector?***

CC said the **Hillingdon Profile is excellent** and will help organisations with funding applications and planning. The **Supporting People's Strategy consultation was another good example**.

MM felt it was difficult to get protocols on information sharing right. But doing it across Police, PCT, Council, etc, would give a good picture of the borough for taking issues forward. He felt more could be done but it needed a dedicated resource. It was not always easy to interpret statistics, e.g. crime stats, - **need someone at the centre who can map, assess and disseminate data**.

MM also felt the **LSP would benefit from publicising human-interest stories** that both identify the LSP and communicate to people what the Council and its partners do.

CC supported this idea and said IT offers the opportunity to build up an information database and ask people for feedback on services.

6. ***What do you think should be the role of the LSP in raising the aspirations of young people?***

CC suggested **newsletters and regular bulletins**. She also mentioned the value of their **'time travellers'** who go into schools to talk to young people. Cllr Hensley congratulated her on this scheme.

MM said **young people don't 'get' targets. It is better to identify good projects that they can buy into** – there are examples of these in community safety. CC said local park improvements also offered these opportunities.

MM said the **mobile bus is very effective** and perhaps a bid should be put in for a second. The Chairman raised the possibility of the LSP bidding for Young People's projects. MM suggested it could be a way of **enabling voluntary organisations to front up a bid that none could do alone**. Paul Williams suggested there could be a **LSP grants group** with the remit to do this.

**7. *What steps could the LSP take to ensure wider involvement in its work?***

MM returned to the suggestion of **human-interest stories**. These would build interest and engagement. Whilst he accepted that the examples discussed were partners' successes and not the LSP's, he thought a link or **branding to the LSP** should be acceptable. Inside the safer localities initiative examples could be found of people's lives being changed for the better.

The Chairman asked if the LSP has engagement targets? Paul Williams said increasing engagement was a key objective and the direction was positive although not as advanced as the LSP would wish. Paul felt the key challenge is to widen involvement and saw the roll out of the **localities initiative** as a way of doing this.

CC suggested **members of theme groups and officers should go out and talk to community groups and forums** about their work and targets.

Paul Williams said community strategy themes were being placed on agendas of for a such as the Older People's Assemblies, and it should be an aspiration for all Officers' PADAs to include engagement which would expand communication substantially.

**8. *Some people say there is a "democratic deficit" in the way the LSP operates currently? Have you any views on this? For example is it reasonable that the LSP audits itself in relation to its own targets?***

MM suggested that if an external body were to audit the LSP then this needed to be bought into by all the partners. He also felt

**monitoring need to be light touch as a lot of what is delivered is from enthusiasm** and too heavy monitoring would dampen it. But if widening accountability meant more buy in from the community, he would welcome it.

CC felt there **needs to be accountability to the wider community** and would be worried if the LSP were not audited at all.

In response to a question, Paul Williams confirmed that the LSP does not do customer surveys but progress on targets is reported regularly to Cabinet and Council and less frequently to the Community Conference.

**8. *If funding became available for an LSP office where would this be best placed - in the Council, with one of the Partners or in some other arrangement?***

MM said it **did not matter where it is located but what is important is what it does**. He suggested that it should:

- Focus on **promotion and communication**, e.g. the human-interest stories.
- Help Hillingdon Partners to **bid for money, lever in funds** and help deliver the partnership working.
- Develop the **good information base needed to back bids**.

On balance he felt the Council needed to be the place for any extra post as other organisations might just treat it as extra support for themselves.

CC said that a LSP office **should be central, very visible and publicly accessible**.

Paul Williams reminded the Committee that the decision had already been taken to set up an independent LSP support office from around April 2006.

**10. *Does the LSP need to focus on fewer priorities – is its current approach making it difficult for people to relate to it?***

CC thought that it is easier to focus on fewer priorities but accepted that the LSP needs to keep in mind the bigger picture. Everyone needs to understand the vision.

MM said the LSP needs to decide whether it wants to be all things to all people or not, and to be clear about its strategy. [MM had to leave the meeting at this point.]

**11. In your opinion, what major changes coming up in the Borough are likely to have an impact on future LSP priorities and/or the way the partnership works?**

CC mentioned the Green Paper about well-being and independence, which was likely to lead to **Social Services becoming more of a procuring organisation, with the independent and voluntary sector doing the providing**. She also thought increasing emphasis would be put on preventative services.

She confirmed that **'reaching out' is important** - maximising income and services, especially for the many people still not claiming their entitlements. Older people want something like the old home help service, which is why Age Concern has put in a bid for a 'helping hand' service. In future only those in greatest need would be able to access Social Services' provision.

She agreed that **demographic changes** would have an impact – more older people living to older ages, high unemployment among the over 55s, older people being expected to stay economically active for longer, women having children later so that they may be faced with the twin problems of troublesome teenagers and their own parents needing help, people no longer being able to rely on families' help in old age, even in ethnic minority communities where this had more tradition.

It was suggest the LSP might take up some of these issues, e.g. challenging ageism. Paul Williams confirmed that there are targets on gender and ethnicity but not on age discrimination because of the issues around pensions, although this could be something for the future.

**Q12. In what ways do you think voluntary and community organisations in Hillingdon could contribute to the LSP's continued development?**

CC suggested other voluntary **organisations would benefit from finding out more about the LSP** and discussing these issues. The Chairman proposed that this suggestion be taken up in the context of the Opportunities for All theme group.

Checked and agreed by Chris Commerford, Mick May and Paul Williams.

## Community Partnerships and Economic Development Overview & Scrutiny Committee

10 January 2006

### Evidence on Neighbourhood Partnerships, the Local Strategic Partnership and Community Safety:

**Witnesses:** Chief Superintendent **Mark Toland**, Hillingdon Borough Commander; Sergeant **Nigel Evans**, in charge of Townfield ward Safer Neighbourhood Team; Sergeant **Kirsty Hayes**, in charge of Botwell ward Safer Neighbourhood Team; **Sue Curley**, community representative on the Uxbridge Safer Neighbourhood People's Panel and on the Neighbourhood Partnership body for the Hayes and Uxbridge pilot areas. From the Council, **David Brough**, Head of Democratic Services and lead officer for Community Safety, and **Maggie Allen**, Community Leadership Manager and a secondee of Groundwork Thames Valley.

#### ***Questions shown in bold and italics***

*On Neighbourhood Partnerships:*

- ***How does partnership work within the initiative? What lessons have been learnt about effective partnership working?***

Points made:

1. The Neighbourhood Partnership currently has 7 Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNTs) covering 8 wards. Each SNT is usually 6 people: 1 Sergeant, 2 Police Constables (PCs) and 3 Police Community Support Officers (PSCOs). The Uxbridge team is little larger as it covers 2 wards rather than one.
2. In April 2006, SNTs will be rolled out to all 14 remaining wards (as they will across London) but with slightly smaller teams – a PC, 2 PCSOs and a Sergeant. The London Mayor has pledged to fund full teams of 6 people by April 2007, possibly earlier.
3. The premise of the initiative is based on consulting with the community. Each team has set up a local consultative panel that can differ in nature to suit circumstances.
4. The teams started by tackling anti-social behaviour. Kirsty and Nigel both have tough areas but have adopted different approaches. Nigel, who has been there 2 years, identified a small number of people who cause much of the trouble. Kirsty, whose team started more recently, was taken aback by the local litter problem and brought out Council officials and Councillors to see it first hand.
5. Successes have been evident in crime reductions that are expected to continue but the main benefit has been in public reassurance.

6. The Police have been given extra resources for the expansion but not all partners have extra resources. Anticipating that this would cause problems, Mark and Maggie set up a project to examine how resources could be used more effectively, e.g. how to co-ordinate initiatives more effectively. Cabinet member for the Environment, Cllr Sandra Jenkins, is involved.
  7. Hayes and Uxbridge had been the pilot areas for the initiative. They started with a mapping exercise and have involved special events, an exhibition, etc. Successes and lessons from those areas now need to be rolled out.
  8. Their experience of partnership is one of sharing information and resources, and seeing problems in a holistic way. This highlights the responsibilities of individual departments within the Council. Frequently Neighbourhood Safety Teams have found they need to make direct approaches to relevant officers rather than going through the Contact Centre and this makes it harder to work out overall demands on the Council. A measurement exercise is being undertaken to gauge future workload. Maggie is working on an induction Manual to signpost and aid new SNTs.
  9. By concentrating information-seeking and resources on a local area more can often be achieved than from Borough-wide initiatives, but Council departments are not organised on a locality basis so we need to think about how to make things work at local level.
- ***What has worked best in terms of communicating and involving the community?***
    1. Kirsty, Nigel and Mark gave examples of effective neighbourhood involvement and action
    2. Kirsty described action to clean up Burbage Close, Botwell, including arranging for around two dozen officials to come and see the problem. This combined with mobilising the local community had led to a clean up and the area staying clean.
    3. Nigel talked about a murder on the Austin Road estate that had focused minds on tackling the “no go area” mentality. Working with Hillingdon Homes had been important, e.g. looking at who is coming on to the estate, caretakers, etc.
    4. Mark mentioned work with the business community in Uxbridge, encouraging them to allow staff to participate in the Special Constables scheme.
    5. Kirsty said Botwell Green Park had also been a “no go area” for locals but by working with the community, Council Departments and especially Councillors, both the Council and local residents had been



galvanised into action. Graffiti paint-outs by shop-keepers had been another way of involving the community.

6. At Hayes End recreation ground, which was leased to a local Community Association, they had identified the need to develop facilities for young people. There were problems over some parks in the north of the Borough having locked facilities. There was a real need to work with Youth and Leisure Services to provide alternatives for groups of young people who would otherwise congregate and were at risk of committing ASB. Maggie confirmed that their surveys of these young people showed sports facilities were top of their list. It was agreed to refer these concerns to Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee as they are reviewing sports facilities in the Borough.
  7. Nigel mentioned working with the Hillingdon Youth Network and with a Somali youth organisation. At Botwell Green Park, there had been a huge turn-around in making the park somewhere families could go. He and Kirsty had also worked together with Townfield Youth Centre, which serves both wards.
  8. The Council's Youth Services had initially not engaged with the teams, but over the last year that had changed.
  9. Asked whether there had been any attempts by Council departments to involve them in service reviews, Maggie said that they are having meetings with departments to plan resource use and Kirsty confirmed that she had been asked for her survey results.
  10. Whilst this was evidence of positive attitude change, all was not rosy. New issues emerge that do fit in, e.g. motorcycling issues. In High Wycombe they have a good project teaching targeted young people motorcycle repairs but in Hillingdon it is proving difficult to respond in this way. Kirsty said she had encountered a similar lack of enthusiasm over boxing.
  11. Asked whether people should go direct to the Police or through Councillors to complain about ASB, Mark said the aim was to give them lots of ways to raise ASB problems, e.g. the Contact Centre, Crimestoppers, Councillors, MPs, Police, etc. The Police ASB team in Hillingdon is now funded by the Council and over 40 ASBOs have been issued compared to about 8 a couple of years ago.
- ***How are neighbourhood partnerships accountable to communities?***
    1. Sue said the SNT and its People's Panel had really got people in Uxbridge talking. The initiative enabled local people to give their priorities and be listened to. Reports were brought back to panels on the action taken so that it became a dynamic process.

2. Mark suggested accountability be considered in terms of getting crime down, reassurance and community engagement.
  3. He thought it important to get the People's Panel launch event right, with a good turnout and cross-section of the community such as happened for the Botwell team launch. They had learnt that they needed to provide more information about crime in the area. Providing transport to the event also helped.
  4. Another lesson learnt was the importance of taking account of people and bodies already doing useful work, e.g. tenants associations or community leaders, and making sure they are involved and don't feel superseded.
  5. Drawing on the example of an Environmental visual audit, it is vital to tell people what you have learnt, tell them what you plan to do and tell them what you have done – thus creating a virtuous circle.
  6. Despite successes, people still tend to feel crime is going up, indicating that successes and what can be done about crime needs to be put over more effectively.
  7. Communication is an area for development. An example of a "who to contact" handout was passed round. This was sent out with electoral register forms last autumn. It was a first attempt and there was scope for development – more "personalising" to each Ward – before the next issue this autumn.
  8. Several suggestions were made about ways of communicating what is happening to the public, e.g. SNT officers going to residents/tenants association meetings; Councillors popping leaflets into letters replying to residents; and local newspapers (all the local papers have expressed interest in having a safer neighbourhoods column).
- ***As plans to roll out neighbourhood partnerships take shape, what will be the implications for Council structures, resources and communication?***
    1. Mark thought there would be a peak of demand when the 14 new teams come in but that it would settle down. This placed an emphasis on planning and co-ordination in order to cope.
    2. Resourcing to meet the new teams is something that the Council is grappling with. Maggie's mapping project is helping inform this. David confirmed a key issue is co-ordination and both he and Mark emphasised the need for more posts like Maggie's. [It was agreed later in the meeting to raise this issue as part of the Council's budget plans.]

3. There was also the issue of different boundaries for Council services and the new neighbourhood teams. This is a challenge which the Council needs to respond to.
  4. Kirsty emphasised that it was important that other agencies as well as the Council were engaged, e.g. Probation needs to work with them to prevent re-offending by offenders returning after their sentence.
  5. Cllr Richard Lewis mentioned the Council's statutory duty to reduce crime, which provided an impetus for properly resourcing the Council's response.
- ***What is the role for local Councillors in Neighbourhood Partnerships?***
    1. Mark emphasised that Councillors should be in at the start of SNTs, giving visible community leadership and helping build partnership. David agreed that neighbourhood partnerships give Councillors a new opportunity to expand their role and standing in the community.
    2. Councillors could also be more proactive. Cllr John Hensley suggested involving the police in occasional advice surgeries. Mark said that the fact that police teams were not able to be pulled off for other duties meant that the past problems of non-availability and gaps in service should be overcome.
    3. It was agreed that the roll out of SNTs and the neighbourhood partnerships offered a good opportunity to develop the community leadership role of local ward Councillors. The Chairman suggested plenty of notice and pre-planning of events, and briefing of ward Councillors, would help Councillors develop this role.

***On the LSP:***

- ***What are the current links between neighbourhood partnerships and the LSP and the Council?***
- ***For LSP members: where has the LSP been most effective so far? Where has it been least effective? What should the LSP do to increase its impact?***
  1. As an LSP member, Mark felt theme groups were working too much in isolation and did not cross-theme. In June 2005, the LSP had started an initiative of having meetings of a representative from each of the theme groups to look at how they can join up more. For example, the "Street Scene" initiative would have gone ahead unco-ordinated with related action if it had not been for this group.

2. The key issues for the LSP to tackle about itself are: visibility; community engagement and wider involvement of the business community.
3. Cross-working is important, e.g. on alcohol, to break down barriers and do practical things. New licensing laws give more emphasis to the local level. The challenge could come next summer if communities ask for reviews of licenses. Educating young people about alcohol is an issue the LSP could take up.
4. Below the LSP, there must be engagement at the level of the locality – this is where there can really be an impact. Paul Williams agreed. While the locality initiatives currently in place are only pilots, this will be the future.

***On Police accountability:***

• ***How might the police be answerable and accountable to communities at different levels?***

1. Thought needs to be given to the various levels of accountability. People's Panels are made up largely of unelected people, although ward councillors can be, and usually are, part of them. The Panels are useful for setting the menu of problems/actions and checking back. They need to be representative of the local community.
2. David Brough reported as Secretary that there is the existing Community and Police Consultative Group (CPCG) which does provide accountability and there are few other bodies where the relevant Chief Officer appears twice a month to explain and account for his actions. But the CPCG needs to change its structure to enable the grass roots to feed through, especially with a potential of 20 plus people's panels as the SNTs roll out.
3. David said that there is an issue in the Government's Proposals for additional powers and responsibilities for the Mayor and Assembly in relation to the accountability of the Metropolitan Police Authority that he would like to bring to the next meeting of the Committee (Agreed).

***On community safety:***

• ***Are there particular community safety areas in the Borough that need strengthening, e.g. road safety.***

1. Community safety is a vast topic and when community safety was set up in Hillingdon the decision was taken to concentrate on key areas and those where there were not already arrangements in place. For these reasons, road safety is not included.

2. Mark said he is aware that Hillingdon is a challenged Borough in terms of road safety, with issues around speeding. Concerns were raised by Members of the Committee about the low number of Road Safety officers. Although Cllr Richard Lewis pointed out that Hillingdon was low on its road safety record (accidents, etc) in London. Cllr John Major referred to a motion put by Cllr Lee Griffin to Council on these issues where it appeared no action had been taken.
  3. Guy Fiegehen suggested that road safety should be treated in the same partnership way that community safety is. It was agreed that Cllr Norman Nunn-Price would take the issues raised about road safety and the point about partnership working to Environment Overview & Scrutiny as they are reviewing road safety.
- ***What is the role of and support for mediation in the Borough? Are the benefits of mediation recognised? Is mediation promoted?***
    1. David explained that the mediation service in the Borough had been initiated through the Community and Police Consultative Group. It was successfully set up by the Housing Department but there was a continuing issue about funding work for non-Council housing. The Community Safety Steering Group have invited a speaker on the scheme to their next meeting. Mediation is seen as having real potential. Nigel confirmed that the Police find the scheme useful.

This summary checked and agreed by Maggie Allen and David Brough, 31 January 2006.

## APPENDIX 4. SUMMARY OF REPLIES TO A SURVEY OF LSP PARTNERS WHO DID NOT COME TO THE COMMITTEE'S MEETINGS

1. In your opinion, where has the LSP been most effective so far? And where has it been less effective?

*Most effective:* In establishing partner working and projects where areas of interest coincide. **Respondent 1**

Crime and social order **Respondent 3**

*Least effective:* In establishing a major multi-agency project. **Respondent 1**

2. How can the Council improve the way it works together with partners in your sector?

By promoting 'Community Safety' in the widest sense of the term. A practical way of achieving this would be by supporting the formation of a 'Safety in the Home' forum to inform and educate those living in Hillingdon and so to increase their 'Safety consciousness'.

**Respondent 2**

In recent years effective ways of communicating and working together have been established and work very well in areas of mutual concern given the different responsibilities of the two organisations.

**Respondent 1**

The Council needs to see itself increasingly in a commissioner role – not a doing role. It needs to promote joint working to joint targets.

**Respondent 3**

3. Have you any views on how the LSP could ensure that the full benefits are obtained from sharing data and information between partners?

This is a difficult area for me to comment on from a London Fire Brigade perspective, as we are at present experiencing difficulties in achieving a pan-London information sharing protocol. **Respondent 2**

No. **Respondent 1**

Just do it. **Respondent 3**

4. What is the best way for the Council to share information about its activities and plans with its partners?

By all means of communication from contact with elected members through partnership formalised groups correspondence. There is a tendency for excessive paperwork to defeat some partners.

**Respondent 1**

The local paper. **Respondent 3**

5. What do you think should be the role of the LSP in raising the aspirations of young people?

This should be in helping to provide the 'rich' environment that success demands – good health; low crime; safe streets; excellent sports and arts; aspirations at borough level that young people can identify with; and aspirational role models.

**Respondent 1**

This is one role, but not the main role. Celebrating success.

**Respondent 3**

6. What steps could the LSP take to ensure wider involvement in its work?

To publicise the work undertaken and the outcomes achieved to the widest possible audience **Respondent 2**

This is a matter for all stakeholders in the Borough as well as partners. Elected members seeing their work as integral to the LSP is one example. The Safer Neighbourhoods initiative is another example that could assist. **Respondent 1**

Greater publicity of key objectives and key achievements.

**Respondent 3**

7. Some people say there is a “democratic deficit” in the way the LSP operates currently – that it is not as accountable as it could be? For example, is it reasonable that the LSP audits itself in relation to its own targets? Have you any views on this?

I would have to question whether the LSP is 'accountable'. I would suggest it is the individual partners that hold the responsibility and not the LSP. The LSP is auditing the performance of the partners but does not have authority over any partner, nor is it able to sanction any partner for not achieving a target. **Respondent 2**

Much of the work of partners is audited by statutory bodies. Presumably the engagement of the electorate, Overview and Scrutiny and so on constitutes the democratic part. Open and transparent self-review is a highly prized aspect of a democracy.

**Respondent 1**

The LSP should make public its targets and then be openly accountable for their achievements. **Respondent 3**

8. A dedicated LSP office will be set up from April. Where would this be best placed - in the Council, with one of the Partners or in some other arrangement? Do you have views on what its functions should be?

I believe that the Council is the only body the capacity and existing infrastructure to ensure that the LSP is serviced efficiently.

**Respondent 2**

It should be located within one of the key statutory bodies where continuity can be met. Ideally its function should be to serve the LSP rather than any part of it.

**Respondent 1**

Functions: the main aims of the LSP should be to ensure that there is greater collaboration between key services which then benefit the wider community. Listening to the wider community is essential in that it provides feedback to the key services.

Location: No views. Location is irrelevant except in perception terms.

**Respondent 3**

9. Does the LSP need to focus on fewer priorities – is its current approach making it difficult for people to relate to it?

The LSP needs some major projects but breadth may be the only way of keeping everyone round the table in the short – medium term.

**Respondent 1**

Yes – The LSP should not be the mechanism where different services tell us what they do. It should be the forum to identify joint working initiatives and achieving joint targets. **Respondent 3**

10. In your opinion, what major changes coming up in the Borough are likely to have an impact on future LSP priorities and/or the way the partnership works?

No comments received



11. In what ways do you think organisations in Hillingdon could contribute to the LSP's continued development?

By partners working together to ensure efficient use of resources through a reduction of duplication of work.

**Respondent 2**

The Local Authority has responsibility for community leadership. Other organisations may serve a wider area and only focus on a particular aspect of the LSP's work.

**Respondent 1**

12. Any other comments you would like to make?

Please note that I am fairly new to the borough and have limited knowledge of the LSP, hence I have only commented on the areas where I feel I am able to hold a considered view. **Respondent 2**