

South Bucks Partnership

Partnership Meeting Wednesday 7th October 2009

Subject	Getting the most out of the South Bucks Partnership - how can we best add value
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1 Purpose of this Report

- 1.1 To report on the Performance through Partnership PtP workshops held in July 2009 and provide the partnership with a summary of the workshops and recommendations for moving the South Bucks Partnership Forward.

2 Background

- 2.1 South Bucks Partnership secured £4000 from Performance through Partnership PtP Regional Improvement and Efficiency Fund. The partnership was awarded the money following a self-assessment of the partnership undertaken in November 2008. £2000 was awarded for improving the working of the partnership itself and £2000 was awarded for a joint county-wide project to consult with vulnerable and seldom heard groups to inform the new Sustainable Community Strategy. Both projects are now complete.
- 2.2 PtP were engaged to run a partnership development activity which took place in July 2009. PtP undertook a review of the governance arrangements in place as well as reviewing a number of key reports and current activities of the partnership. They ran a half-day workshop for members of the partnership to explore how partners could get the most out of the partnership. A summary of the workshop can be found in Appendix A, and a report with recommendations for improvement can be found in Appendix B.

3 Discussion

- 3.1 The South Bucks Partnership Implementation Group discussed the recommendations from PtP at their meeting in September 2009. The implementation group would like to recommend to the partnership a number of changes and improvements to the way meetings are run and the responsibility and resultant actions undertaken by partners during and following meetings.
- 3.2 Recommendations from the Implementation Group for improving South Bucks Partnership:
 - 3.2.1 Trial an alternative room layout where partners sit in groups of approximately 8 around tables laid out in cabaret style. This is to facilitate discussion, enable all partners to participate in discussion and decision-making and improve partnership working between partners. The success of this new room layout will be reviewed after 2 and 4 meetings.
 - 3.2.2 Change the agenda papers, so where possible reports are shorter with additional information set out in an Appendix.
 - 3.2.3 Change the format of meetings to include a theme debate for half the meeting (1 hour) on one of the Sustainable Community Strategy Themes. This will begin at this October meeting with a theme debate on the Thriving Economy Theme. Partners will be given information in their agenda packs to inform table discussions. Each table will be asked to feedback actions for improvement and recommendations for improving partnership working within this theme. It is expected that partners come to the meeting prepared for the discussion. Partners will be asked to try to think of the wider role of their organisation and to suggest what things the organisation they represent can do to help deliver the outcomes within the theme being discussed.

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- 3.2.4 The implementation group will draw up a workplan, to include actions for improvement identified through undertaking a gap analysis on the Sustainable Community Strategy and actions and improvements identified at Partnership meetings either through the theme debate or other reports and discussions. This will enable the partnership to track change and improvements and request feedback on actions from partner organisations responsible to achieving actions and outcomes. The workplan will be a series of cross-cutting actions which draws out the connections between partners and highlights opportunities for partners to improve the way they work together. It is suggested the workplan be split by the themes in the Sustainable Community Strategy showing links where appropriate. The Implementation Group will oversee the progress against the workplan and feedback regularly to the South Bucks Partnership.
- 3.2.5 The District Council with support from the Implementation Group will draft a handbook with relevant information to support partners. This will include terms of reference for the partnership, what is expected of partners - their roles and responsibilities, a list of acronyms. We hope this will be ready for circulation at your January meeting. It will be a useful guide for new members joining the partnership.
- 3.2.6 The Implementation Group discussed its role and the role of sub-groups supporting the Implementation Group and the delivery of the Sustainable Community Strategy. It was agreed to look at the need and viability of establishing sub-groups for each of the Sustainable Community Strategy Themes. This is something that will be discussed further at the next Policy Officer's Group Meeting and will be followed up at the next Implementation Group Meeting in December.
- 3.2.7 The Bucks Policy Officers Group have been working on a project to improve communication of information to members of Local Strategic Partnerships, this includes the South Bucks Partnership. A new e-magazine has been published www.buckinghamshiretogether.org.uk. A new partnership website is being developed which will have a section for the South Bucks Partnership for partners to report on successful partnership working in South Bucks and it will have a know your community section partners will be able to access with ward profiles and other statistical information about South Bucks and Bucks communities. There will also be information on the Local Area Agreement and Sustainable Community Strategies.
- 3.2.8 The District Council is committed to updating the South Bucks Partnership pages on its website and these will be done for the next partnership meeting in January.

4 Recommendation

- 4.1 Partners to discuss and agree recommendations for improving the South Bucks Partnership

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Background Papers:	