

Sandwell Partnership

Notes of a Meeting of the Executive Board of the Sandwell Strategic Housing Forum

25th March, 2009 at 2.00 p.m.
at the Sandwell Council House, Oldbury

Present:

Councillor Simon Hackett (Chair) (Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council [MBC] – Cabinet Advisor);
Dr Chris Handy (Vice-Chair) (Accord Housing Association – Chief Executive);
Dr Derrick Campbell (Race Equality Sandwell – Chief Executive);
Ian Cruise-Taylor (Black Country Connexions – Chief Executive);
Dominic Harman (Persimmon Homes (West Midlands) - Managing Director);
Peter John (Sandwell MBC - Corporate Services - Director of Partnerships and Housing);
Jan MacMillan (Sandwell Community Involvement & Participation Services - Company Secretary);
Neeraj Malhotra (Sandwell Primary Care Trust - Public Health Specialist);
Kim Mocroft (Sandwell MBC – Urban Regeneration - Economic Regeneration & Skills Division – Community Development Unit);
John Selway (Sandwell Private Landlord Forum – Member);
Andrea Pope-Smith (Sandwell MBC - Executive Director Adult & Community Services);

Adam Carey (Urban Living);
Denise Williams (Sandwell MBC - Children & Young People's Services - Children's Social Care Division - Locality Partnership Manager (ISA)).

Apologies:

Lynda Bateman (Sandwell MBC – Urban Regeneration - Interim Executive Director);
Gary Bowman (Sandwell Partnership – Partnership Director);
Nigel Christie (Urban Living – Interim Chief Executive);

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Mark Davis (Sandwell Council of Voluntary Organisations - Acting Chief Executive Officer);
Paul Jones (Riverside Homes – Assistant Director);
Brian Oakley (Sandwell Homes – Chief Executive);
Philippa Smith (Sandwell MBC – Urban Regeneration – Planning and Transportation Division - Principal Planner);
Colin Tucker (Sandwell MBC - Children & Young People's Services - Director of Children's Social Care);
Kirsten Casey (Sandwell MBC – Corporate Services - Partnerships and Housing Division - Housing Partnerships Manager).

In attendance: Terri Whittaker and Stuart Lackenby (Sandwell MBC - Adult & Community Services - Inclusion and Improvement Division - Self Directed Support Development Manager);
Steve Smith (Sandwell MBC – Corporate Services - Partnering & Improvement Division - Service Manager, Partnering & Improvement).

Officer Support: Maureen Christian (Sandwell MBC - Corporate Services - Partnerships and Housing Division - Partnerships Officer);
Laura Coburn (Sandwell MBC - Corporate Services - Partnerships and Housing Division - Assistant Partnerships Officer);
Nick Laws (Sandwell MBC, - Corporate Services - Partnerships and Housing Division –Commissioning & Performance Manager).

11/00

Notes of Last Meeting

The notes of the meeting of the Executive Board held on 28th January, 2009 were received and approved.

With reference to Note No 4/09, (Area Masterplans), the Partnerships Officer, Partnerships and Housing division advised the Executive Board that the OJEU process to procure a Masterplanner for the Three Estates Masterplan Programme (Tibbington/ Durham/ Charlemont Farm) was well underway. During the week commencing 16th March, 2009 shortlisted organisations had attended a series of technical Interviews, followed by interviews with Community Representatives. The process had now identified a Masterplanning Consultant to deliver masterplans to support this programme.

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Feed-back from the Local Strategic Partnership Board

The Executive Board received and considered a paper from the Partnership Director, Sandwell Partnership which set out those issues directly affecting the Sandwell Strategic Housing Forum and/or its Executive Board from the meetings of the Local Strategic Partnership Board (LSPB) held on 10th December, 2008 and 29th January, 2009.

With reference to 2901.7 (Participation of Housing Associations in a Joint-led Recruitment Campaign between the Council, Schools and Local Businesses) the Executive Board fully endorsed the proposal that partner agencies should seek to create a “championship relationship” and working partnerships with schools to develop pupil awareness of the full range of the potential job market.

The Partnership Director, Sandwell Partnership undertook to work with the Housing Partnerships Manager, Partnerships and Housing Division, Corporate Services, Sandwell MBC and the Housing Development and Regeneration Thematic Group to approach the most relevant housing associations, Sandwell Homes, Riverside, Registered Social Landlords, businesses and the University of Wolverhampton, (via Stewart Towe), to explore the potential for a joint led campaign that would support attainment of Sandwell young people to achieve at school.

The Chief Executive of Black Country Connexions reminded partners to be aware of equal opportunities issues and undertook to raise the matter with the Partnership Director, Sandwell Partnership.

With reference to 2901.16, (the LSPB “PREVENT” agenda [work to prevent violent extremism and terrorism within the community]), the LSPB had asked the Executive Board to give a commitment to “PREVENT” on behalf of the Forum and had invited further contributions to the PREVENT action plan. The Executive Board felt that it could agree with the basic principle that violent extremism and terrorism should be prevented, as a “housing body” it would be useful to see the detail of the Action Plan before giving commitments which could not be delivered.

The Action Sheet from the meeting of the LSPB held on 19th March, 2009 was also submitted for information. The Action Sheet is attached as an Appendix hereto.

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Performance Framework - Approval of and “Signing up to” The Sandwell Strategic Housing Forum Business Plan and Delivery Plan

The Commissioning and Performance Manager - Sandwell MBC - Corporate Services, Partnerships and Housing Division presented the Draft Strategic Housing Forum Business Plan and Delivery Plan for 2009/10. The objectives of the Executive Board in managing delivery of the Plan were to:-

- * effectively influence the supply and demand for housing in Sandwell;
- * increase choice while ensuring the housing is accessible and affordable for all sections of the community;
- * provide high quality places and homes;
- * support sustainable communities;
- * support vulnerable people;
- * develop housing interventions that support and promote economic competitiveness.

Work priorities for the Executive Board would include:-

- * monitoring the implementation of the Delivery Plan;
- * producing the 2010/11 Business Plan and Delivery Plan;
- * complete an Equality Impact Assessment on the Thematic business Plan.

The Business Plan also included the Objectives and Work Priorities for the:-

(a) Research and Demographic Change Group to:-

- * ensure robust evidence base to support the Housing Strategy;
- * ensure the strengths and benefits of wider regional and sub-regional working are fully integrated into the Housing Strategy;
- * produce an Annual Housing Market Report;
- * Commission and evaluate key pieces of research and report findings to the Executive Board;
- * develop closer joint working between Partnerships and Housing, *Research Sandwell and Urban Living to ensure efficient and effective use of research resources available;

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(b) Housing Development & Regeneration Group to:-

- * ensure housing development programmes, housing-led regeneration schemes and area-based initiatives are planned and delivered effectively;
- * maximise inward investment and support housing-led regeneration across the Borough;
- * work with regional and sub-regional partners to ensure the coordination of investment and the implementation of housing development initiatives across the Borough;
- * deliver Affordable Housing programmes in line with Sandwell's identified needs;
- * improve the variety, design, quality and choice of Housing;

(c) Community Regeneration Group to:-

- * develop and support bespoke community regeneration initiatives, linked to area-based regeneration programmes with public, private, community and voluntary sector partners;
- * ensure an effective approach for resident engagement and participation in community and area based initiatives;
- * encourage innovative and inclusive approaches to neighbourhood management to ensure safer and stronger communities for all;
- * promote initiatives that support diverse, cohesive communities throughout the Borough;

(d) Housing and Health Group to:-

- * develop and maintain a borough wide holistic housing and health strategy;
- * work towards eliminating fuel poverty;
- * identify and implement housing led interventions which bring about health benefits particularly to those who are vulnerable;
- * identify and implement interventions which help maintain independent living or support the transition to other accommodation for health reasons;
- * support the councils initiatives to prevent homelessness.

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Over the next twelve months the discussions at the Executive Board would further develop the Business Plan to focus on performance and to develop links with other themes to deliver real outcomes. The time-frame for the implementation of the Delivery Plan would also be continually evolving as the Thematic Groups reported back to the Executive Board on delivery/ performance.

A real challenge for the Executive Board would be to identify, and evidence, what “additionality” each partner member of the Executive Board brought to achieving the objectives of each Plan.

Members commented that, amongst other things, the Business Plan and the Delivery Plan both provided:-

clarity of purpose;
clear aspirations;
ownership of targets;
networking;
opportunities to develop public private partnerships;
better coordination of activities;
increased value for money;
cross-fertilisation of information.

The Chair stressed that the emphasis of the Executive Board should now be on delivery. He hoped that by the Strategic Housing Forum Conference in November, 2009 the Executive Board would be able to provide practicable examples of what had been done.

It was agreed that the Draft Sandwell Strategic Housing Forum Business Plan and Delivery Plan for 2009/10 be approved.

14/09

The Adults Safeguarding Agenda

The Executive Board heard a presentation from the Self Directed Support Development Managers, Inclusion and Improvement Division, Adult & Community Services, Sandwell MBC on the requirements of the Adults Safeguarding Agenda. The Key messages of the presentation were that:-

- * Safeguarding was “Everybody’s Business/ Responsibility, this meant it had to be mainstreamed as part of wider transformation of health and social care;

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- * Safeguarding must run through every agency's organisational plan structures and be appropriately cross linked and referenced;
- * Safeguarding is Integral to all current policy/ practice developments, not an 'add on' or afterthought;
- * 'Be Safe' has to be an outcome in its own right, a prompt for good practice and a measure of success;
- * the definition of 'Be Safe' applied to a very broad group of vulnerable adults including prostitutes, victims of domestic violence, people with learning difficulties, people with mental health problems and vulnerable older people;
- * Safeguarding requires a new professionalism which puts people in charge of their own services whilst putting in place checks and balances to safeguard them where necessary. This had significant implications for assessment and care management;
- * the key challenge of Safeguarding was to empower/ enable AND protect!.

A Sandwell Safeguarding Adults Board had been established to co-ordinate work across all partner agencies and the Executive Director Adult & Community Services, Sandwell MBC stated that she would be seeking either a senior housing officer or a representative of the Executive Board to serve on the Safeguarding Adults Board.

It was agreed:-

- (1) that this important matter be referred to the Community Regeneration Thematic Group for closer examination of the implications;
- (2) that the Executive Director Adult & Community Services, Sandwell MBC provide details of the Sandwell Safeguarding Adults Board to the Democratic Services Officer to the Executive Board for circulation, and that any member interested in serving on the Safeguarding Board liaise with the Chair of the Executive Board.

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Dates of Future Meetings

It was agreed that meetings would be held at 9.30 a.m. on Thursdays:-

7th May, 2009	at Sandwell Community Information & Participation Service (SCIPS), Ground Floor, Christ Church, Birmingham St, Oldbury;
2nd July, 2009	at Accord Housing Association, 178 Birmingham Road, West Bromwich;
10th September, 2009	at Sandwell Homes, Roway Lane, Oldbury;
12th November, 2009	Venue to be arranged;
7th January, 2010	at Urban Living, 4th Floor, Hawthorns House, Halfords Lane, West Bromwich;
4th March, 2010	Venue to be arranged.

(Meeting ended at 3.50 p.m.)

<i>Contact Officer: Richard. M. Ebanks Democratic Services Unit 0121 569 3190</i>
