

BRECKLAND PARTNERSHIP

07 October 2010

Report of Mark Fretwell, Partnership (LSP) Officer, Breckland Council

The Breckland Partnership – Its Future Role?

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To update the LSP Board Members on an ever changing landscape influenced by a wide range of emerging policy changes at all levels of government.
- 1.2 To reach agreement on the preferred approach in updating the current Sustainable Community Strategy for Breckland, this ends in 2011.
- 1.3 To recommend conducting a full review of the Breckland Partnership in its current format and to explore future working arrangements to ensure it is fit for purpose.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that the LSP Board:

- 2.1 Note [for information and planning purposes] the contents of this report.
- 2.2 To refresh the Sustainable Community Strategy (due to expire in 2011) so it is fit for purpose in light of the changing context in which it and the partnership operates.
- 2.3 To agree to the outlined process and the timescales for sign off in refreshing the SCS as outlined in the report. (A further more detailed report to be submitted at December Board meeting).
- 2.4 To carry out a full review of the Breckland Partnership in conjunction with the strategy refresh to include the current delivery structure, performance, funding allocation and a proposed structure moving forward to deliver the refreshed SCS.

3. Background

- 3.1 A LSP Challenge session took place on the 27th June involving the county and district Local Strategic Partnership (LSPs). In order to review how we work together and identify opportunities for improvements.
- 3.2 There was consensus to improve the current joint working arrangements and to simplify how we deliver our respective partnerships and their interactions.
- 3.3 This is in line with Government thinking and the need to review current working practises across all partners is high on the agenda in light of the spending review.
- 3.4 The changing landscape locally and nationally in delivering through partnerships is evident in the following:
 - The development of a Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)
 - A review of the Norfolk Public Services Leaders Board
 - Changes to the Norfolk Children and Young People's Trust
 - The development of Place Based Budgets
 - The localism and Big Society agenda
 - New requirements for a Health & Wellbeing Board

4. Issues

4.1 LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

- 4.1.1 No specific Government statements have been made on the future of LSPs, in terms of their role and responsibilities. On the one hand, the trend towards localism, greater autonomy, and more freedoms should strengthen the role of these bodies. On the other hand, the uncertain future of LAAs and Total Place, and the abolition of CAA, means that the former regular workload of LSPs and their thematic sub-partnerships has changed in a short space of time. Some of the dynamics which brought (and kept) local partner agencies to a shared table are no longer there, recent evidence even suggests some are looking to abolish their LSP.
- 4.1.2 Many LSPs are in the process of reviewing their sustainable community strategies to meet difficult challenges ahead, and will be looking for ways of making savings through closer joint working with partners, shared asset management, and possible workforce integration. These activities are clearly very relevant to the new Government's agenda.
- 4.1.3 LSPs also have an important potential role in addressing the questions set in the Spending Review Framework on the shifting boundaries between citizen and state.
- 4.1.4 Future arrangements for 'governance of place' will also be affected by Government plans for widening democratisation and local accountability across primary health care and policing.

4.2 SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY

- 4.2.1 Councils and LSPs are free to choose the format and content of their SCS and how they wish to draw up and publish them, a wide range of formats have been used.
- 4.2.2 Section 4(3) of the 2000 Local Government Act, as amended by Section 114 of the Act, Districts are simply under a duty to consult and seek the participation of such organisations and people as they consider appropriate. As Communities and Local Government guidance explains, the statutory requirement to prepare a SCS applies to both district and county councils. Section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972 permits a local authority to discharge any functions jointly with another.
- 4.2.3 Sharing data and statistics across the partner agencies within a LSP has also developed quickly in recent years and remains a key feature of effective joint working at a local level.
- 4.2.4 The role of LSPs in defining targets within a LAA looks to have ceased, given that a further round of LAAs post-2011 is not expected. But LSPs, and their thematic sub-partnerships, will have a continuing role in doing 'more for less' and in reconfiguring public services at a time of cutbacks in public expenditure.
- 4.2.5 Local partnership working will change significantly following new policies introduced by the coalition government. New 'Health and Wellbeing Boards' will have a statutory status, and a defined role in relation to GPs commissioning NHS services, health improvement, and public health. Directly-elected police commissioners will need to choose how they work alongside community safety partnerships and crime and disorder reduction partnerships.
- 4.2.6 LSPs still remain something of an experiment in collaborative governance for local areas. In statutory or formal terms, their accountability to make big decisions on the future for their area remains weak. And yet, no other body is available to take an overview across public services and to make collective choices on behalf of their areas.

4.3 FUTURE OF BRECKLAND PARTNERSHIP

4.3.1 In light of the necessity to refresh the SCS it seems a valuable opportunity to review the Breckland Partnership in its current format in conjunction with the SCS.

4.3.2 Set out below are '4' stages briefly outlined that we need to build on in refreshing the SCS and reviewing the Breckland Partnership. Together with the key dates for the LSP Board meetings and the Council committee meetings where approval needs to be granted

4.3.3 'SCOPING STAGE' (October / November)

Set up a review and project team:

- Partnership (LSP) officer
- Performance Team
- Member
- Director
- Key managers
- Partner(s)

A full review of current Sustainable Community Strategy:

- What is still relevant?
- What needs updating?
- What gaps/barriers exist?
- What has been the focus?
- Local Spending Review – implications for future?

A full review of the Breckland Partnership:

Structure, membership, achievements, strengths & weaknesses, performance management, communications, accountability, project management etc

Design and distribute a partner questionnaire:

- Key priorities and focus
- Future commitment of time and resources
- Evidence of need and consultation data
- Links to current strategies or projects

Partners One to One interviews (if required):

Discuss the SCS refresh, priorities & LSP moving forward

4.3.4 'TESTING STAGE' (December / January)

3rd Dec LSP Board meeting

Review updates on progress in refreshing SCS and review of Partnership, seek Board direction and respond accordingly

- Update report on SCS refresh and Breckland Partnership
- Complete partner One to One interviews
- Identified gaps or barriers highlighted deliver a coordinated & targeted response
- Draft sections of SCS tested with relevant partners & community
- Collate and analyse data and evidence align with

4.3.5 'DRAFT STAGE' (February / March)

3rd Feb LSP Board meeting

Draft SCS or sections submitted and seek Board direction and respond accordingly

Feb/Mar - Post Board meeting

- Amendments to SCS
- Any gaps or issues identified resolved
- Testing through partners and community forums and stakeholder events e.g Youth Council, Police panels

March (TBA) - Away day / workshop

- Focussed on SCS refresh & Breckland Partnership moving forward
- Celebration of achievements to date discuss the future context

4.3.6 '**APPROVAL STAGE'** (April / May)

7th April LSP Board meeting

Agree and ratify the proposed SCS/Structure 2011 and beyond.

- 20th April Submission report and papers to Breckland Council Committees
- 27th April C.M.T approval
- 9th May Executive Board
- 10th May Cabinet
- 12th May Full Council
- 19th May LSP Board (launch & publicity of SCS & Partnership)

4.3.7 A process of continuous data and evidence collection and analysis will be carried out through to the approval stage to include:

- Place survey results
- MORI Survey report
- Budget setting priorities
- Local Development Framework consultation
- Partners consultation and evidence of priorities
- Community focus groups
- Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)
- Norfolk Insight data

4.3.8 The need to ensure both the SCS and the Breckland Partnership are fit for purpose for the future is essential in order to deliver value for money and to continue to deliver valuable projects for the communities we serve.

4.3.9 Due to the tight timescales to achieve the above there will need to be some flexibility in the approach and it will require partners to support the process throughout.

5. Options

5.1 To note [for information and planning purposes] the contents of this report.

5.2 To 'support' the recommendations put forward in this report.

5.3 To 'not support' the recommendations put forward in this report.

5.4 To 'part support' the recommendations put forward in this report.

6. Reasons for Recommendation(s)

6.1 The LSP Board giving approval to a full review of the Breckland Partnership will allow the Breckland Partnership to better understand its current position and the opportunities and challenges in the future.

6.2 The Breckland Partnership to perform effectively and to deliver sustainable outcomes requires the full support of all its partners to determine the priorities and to focus its resources in the most efficient way.

6.3 The refresh of the Sustainable Community Strategy is a requirement under Local Government Act 2000 this provides a great opportunity to review the partnership and its functionality to ensure we are well placed to deliver our priorities and ensure we are fit for purpose.

- 6.4 The changing political, social and economic landscape necessitates the need to reflect, understand and make changes to ensure the sustainability of the partnership by ensuring it is resistant to outside influences and delivers value for all.
- 6.5 The Government has made its priorities of reducing public sector spending, decentralisation and empowering communities clear. Whilst as part of the devolution agenda it is being left to local areas to identify the most appropriate way forward.