

BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

From: Project and Programme Executive	Report Number: L97
To: STRATEGY COMMITTEE	Date of meeting: 3 November 2011

FUTURE OF LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS IN BABERGH

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To inform Members of the changing landscape with regard to Local Strategic Partnerships to enable consideration to be given to Babergh's future involvement.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That subject to a new Local Strategic Partnership covering the areas of Mid Suffolk and Babergh districts being confirmed on 22 November 2011 Babergh District Council withdraws from the West Suffolk Local Strategic Partnership with effect from 31 December 2011. Further, that Council be asked to make an appointment of a Member to serve on the newly created partnership for Babergh and Mid Suffolk from 1 January 2012 for the remainder of the current term of office.
- 2.2 That the Overview and Scrutiny (Community Services) Committee be asked to undertake a review of the effectiveness of the new partnership arrangements during 2012.

The Committee is able to resolve this matter.

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 Babergh makes no direct financial contribution, other than meeting some minimal room hire costs etc., in respect of Local Strategic Partnerships. The proposals set out in this report will have a beneficial impact on officer time. Currently, Mid Suffolk and Babergh District Council officers are involved in the Mid Suffolk Local Strategic Partnership, the Babergh East Local Strategic Partnership and the West Suffolk Local Strategic Partnership. Under the proposals set out in this report officer time will be reduced to involvement in one partnership.
- 3.2 Discussions will be held on the detail of west Babergh's share (19%) of residual West Suffolk LSP monies (currently totalling £80,849 capital and £29,700 revenue funding).

4. Risk Management

- 4.1 This report is most closely linked with the Council's Significant Business Risk No. 5 – Partnerships. Key risks are set out below:

Risk Description	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Measures
Loss of reputation with West Suffolk LSP	5 – Very low	4 – Negligible	Continue existing dialogue with West Suffolk LSP

5. Consultations

- 5.1 The Council, at Member and Officer level, has been involved in discussions with all three LSPs, which are made up of a wide range of partners, concerning this issue for several months. Discussions have also taken place with Peter Jones, the Babergh Member representative on the Babergh East LSP and Len Young the Babergh Member representative on the West Suffolk LSP.

6. Equality and Diversity Impact

- 6.1 There are no negative impacts arising from this proposal.

7. Shared Service/Partnership Implications

- 7.1 This proposal will streamline partnership arrangements for both local authorities.

8. Key Information

- 8.1 LSP's were created in Suffolk around Spring 2002 in response to the Local Government Act 2000, which gave local authorities broad powers to promote the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of their communities. Councils have a duty for promoting wellbeing through community strategies and Government guidance was that these strategies be produced by broad based partnerships which brought together a range of public, private, voluntary and community organisations called "Local Strategic Partnerships".
- 8.2 Although it was rather unusual the reasoning behind Babergh District Council and partners supporting the District being in two LSP's was quite deliberate. The east/west split reflected "communities of interest" i.e. how and where residents used local services. Significantly the east/west split was the same as the then boundary line between the Central and Bury Primary Care Trusts and the then Sudbury and Hadleigh Police sectors. The LSP area covers 44 parishes. The western part of Babergh is in the West Suffolk LSP.
- 8.3 In contrast the Mid Suffolk LSP covers all of the parishes (122) in the area.
- 8.4 Since the District and Borough elections in May 2011 LSP's in Suffolk have been considering their future in the light of the changing landscape. There has been no Government pronouncement on the future of LSP's.
- 8.5 The Mid Suffolk and Babergh East LSP's are moving towards the creation of a new LSP based on the Babergh and Mid Suffolk districts. The two LSPs are meeting together on 22 November where they will be asked to confirm this new partnership.
- 8.6 The West Suffolk LSP has, at the same time, being considering its own future role and direction. It has agreed that the best way forward is as follows:-
- The partnership to continue, but to be renamed the West Suffolk Strategic Partnership and the membership to be refreshed.

- The existing West Suffolk Local Strategic Partnership Forum to be re-launched as the West Suffolk Network and be focused on helping communities to achieve what they want for their areas. A multi-agency officer group could form an integral part of the network to help facilitate communications. Detailed proposals for both a new strategic partnership and network will be brought to the next board meeting on 21 December. It is expected that the new partnership will be formally launched by the end of March 2012. The board has invited Babergh District Council to clarify whether it would wish to remain part of the West Suffolk LSP and, therefore, part of any new West Suffolk Network.

8.7 At two workshops in August, which partners from both Mid Suffolk and Babergh East LSP's and the West Suffolk LSP attended, it was recognised that although an important continuing role was networking, liaison and building relationships it was essential that a new LSP had a clear direction and purpose. These matters will be discussed at the meeting on 22 November and will evolve over the winter.

8.8 It is encouraging that partners are taking the initiative to create a new LSP and important that Babergh engages with it and is a part of the development of its new role. The new partnership could provide a very useful forum to engage with about future budgets and support delivery of the Council's new approach to communications, fulfilling a key role of building strong relations with partners and stakeholders to ensure they are engaged and involved, and our reputation among them is maintained and ideally enhanced.

8.9 The current proposals mean there will be a partnership for West Suffolk (St Edmundsbury and Forest Heath District Council areas), Babergh and Mid Suffolk, and Waveney and Suffolk Coastal District Councils have just announced the creation of one LSP to cover the totality of the two District Council areas. Ipswich Borough Council is moving towards area committees.

8.10 Given the approach taken by the Mid Suffolk and Babergh East LSPs, the need to realign limited resources and the refreshing of the West Suffolk LSP, now would seem an appropriate time to withdraw from this partnership. A review of the effectiveness of the new arrangements can be undertaken by Overview and Scrutiny (Community Services) Committee during the latter part of 2012.

9. Appendices

9.1 None.

10. Background Documents

None.

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