

# South Oxfordshire Partnership board meeting



**MINUTES: 4 JULY 2012**

Meeting held in Committee Room 4, South Oxfordshire District Council offices

## **Members present**

Bishop Colin Fletcher, (Chairman), Oxfordshire Churches Together  
Ken Hall, Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils (OALC)  
Richard Peacock, SOHA Housing  
Jackie Silver, Community Places Project Worker, SOHA Housing  
Di Batchelor, Abingdon and Witney College  
Councillor Nick Carter, Oxfordshire County Council (OCC)  
Councillor Ann Ducker, South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC)  
Meryl Smith, Oxfordshire Rural Community Council (ORCC)

## **In attendance**

Sally Truman, Shared Policy and Partnerships Manager (SODC)  
Clare Kingston, Shared Head of Corporate Strategy (SODC)  
Anne Hall, Shared Corporate Projects Officer (SODC)

1.	<b>Welcome, apologies, introductions and announcements</b>  1.1. Apologies had been received from James Carter (Early Intervention Centre - Hub), Nicole Sharpe (Sovereign Housing), Paul Lawrence (OAYP – Oxfordshire Association for Young People)  1.2. There was a welcome and brief introduction for Councillor Nick Carter from Oxfordshire County Council who replaces Councillor Lorraine Lindsay-Gale as the lead member for South Oxfordshire. Councillor Carter is the Cabinet member for Business and Communications.	
2.	<b>Minutes of the previous meeting</b>  3.1 The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as true and accurate.	



5.	<p><b>Didcot growth projects update</b></p> <p>5.1 Sally Truman provided a summary of the report on Didcot growth projects which included information on the Orchard Centre, Portas Pilot, Station forecourt improvements and SVUK.</p> <p>5.2 The GWP development is on schedule with the first phase of building. There will be 3,500 houses in South Oxfordshire and 600 in Vale of White Horse.</p> <p>5.3 Ann Ducker said that there are 125 acres of land at the Power station site to be allocated during 2013/14 for other purposes such as commercial development.</p> <p>5.4 Nick Carter asked for information about the decision of the Portas pilots and Ann Ducker said that as Didcot is in a relatively affluent area we were not likely to have been successful. Despite not getting the Portas pilot funding the council is committed to putting money towards projects to improve the Broadway environment.</p>	
6.	<p><b>Community Places Project update: Berinsfield Advisory Group (BAG) and Great Western Park (GWP)</b></p> <p>6.1 Jackie Silver summarised the BAG report she prepared for the meeting on the recent achievements, next steps and proposed capital projects.</p> <p>6.2 Jackie said that Berinsfield has produced a draft action plan following consultation with residents, business and other stakeholders. A copy of the draft Berinsfield Action Plan and the consultation information gathered at the Celebration Day in May will be sent out with the minutes.</p> <p>6.3 Ken Hall told the meeting that Berinsfield parish council had distributed a medallion to all children up to the age of 11 as part of the recent Celebration Day in May.</p> <p>6.4 It was confirmed by Jackie Silver and Ken Hall that BAG and the parish council are working more closely now.</p> <p>6.5 Jackie said that there is a survey being circulated at GWP to all residents.</p> <p>6.6 Jackie reported that although there is still no official community building yet, the new GWP residents association has around 20 members and uses the local Stephen Freeman school to meet.</p> <p>6.7 There was a request to have a timeline for development circulated with an estimated date of when to expect the 150<sup>th</sup> house to be built, as this is the trigger for when a community centre is due to be available. Anne Richardson will provide details</p>	<p>A Richardson</p> <p>A Richardson</p>

	<p>with the minutes. (Post meeting note: <i>The agreement with the GWP developers is that the site for a community centre and agreed funding will be provided prior to the occupation of the 150<sup>th</sup> house. As of mid July 2012, 128 dwellings are occupied and it is expected that the 150<sup>th</sup> dwelling will be occupied by the end of the year, perhaps by October.</i>)</p> <p>6.8 Jackie reported that there is a muddy path leading from the development to Stephen Freedman school which OCC are responsible for improving. Nick Carter offered to contact the relevant person at OCC to ensure that this is underway and confirm this with Jackie.</p>	N Carter
7.	<p><b>Community-led planning (CLP) update</b></p> <p>7.1 Anne Richardson provided a summary of the recent community led planning activity within the district detailed in the CLP report.</p> <p>7.2 Anne Richardson showed members a printed copy of the recently published Nuffield Parish Plan, available online at: <a href="http://www.clp-se.org.uk/">http://www.clp-se.org.uk/</a> . Members were requested to review the actions within the plan to determine how their respective organisations may be able to help the community deliver on their plan.</p> <p>7.3 South Oxfordshire currently has 49 parishes with plans at various stages of the CLP process including some that are interested in getting started and those that are implementing their action plans. This represents 58 per cent of the 85 towns and parishes in the district.</p> <p>7.4 The council is continuing to offer support to communities throughout the development of the plans, with limited support on consultation work.</p> <p>7.5 The CLP page has been updated on the district council website and has a dedicated URL: <a href="http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/communityledplanning">www.southoxon.gov.uk/communityledplanning</a></p>	ALL
8.	<p><b>Review of the future role of the partnership</b> (<i>this item was brought forward on the agenda as one member needed to leave the meeting early</i>)</p> <p>8.1 Sally Truman thanked members for their feedback to the Review of the future role of the partnership report she prepared for the meeting. Sally reminded the group that local strategic partnerships are no longer a statutory requirement. Also, with the increase of work pressures at member organisations and in particular the council, including support to community led planning</p>	

	<p>groups, and the acknowledgement that the level of support from the council for the partnership is not sustainable. .</p> <p>8.2 Colin Fletcher commented that what the group has achieved to date is valuable although the government isn't favouring these types of partnerships so we are at a point when we need to look at making changes for the future.</p> <p>8.3 Ann Ducker said the partnership has worked extremely well as a group, led by Colin Fletcher. The partnership had a 'shoe string' budget to work with and was grateful to have used the LAA reward grant money to help fund the Community Places project. Ann said we are lucky to have Jackie Silver working on this project for the partnership. Ann added that networking through the partnership has been valuable and worked well in getting to know all the organisations and people involved.</p> <p>8.4 Ann Ducker observed that some members are not as well represented on the board as they once were and one reason for this could be that businesses now have their own networking organisation in the LEP. Ann added that we need to move on to the next phase. Community led planning is doing well and the council needs to be supporting this although it may mean that the partnership as it has been has come to the end of its life.</p> <p>8.5 Richard Peacock expressed concern about moving to an email only type of contact between members as networking face to face is valuable and suggested that option 2 (Twice yearly informal meetings at which partners can share their future plans, disseminate information and discuss opportunities for joint working) where the group could meet twice a year informally was the best way forward.</p> <p>8.6 Meryl Smith said the partnership shouldn't be limited to just a few people around the table, as it has been recently.</p> <p>8.7 Nick Carter said that the LEP is a successful countywide organisation, so we could use this group as a networking opportunity locally with a communities focus.</p> <p>8.8 Ann Ducker felt the group needed something to keep rural areas within the district linked together and suggested that twice a year the council could invite service delivery organisations and those working with the community to join together.</p> <p>8.9 Nick Carter mentioned that Buckingham has a networking group that is successful and he would look into how this works and</p>	
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	<p>let the group know.</p> <p>8.10 Meryl Smith thought we could still use an email partnership network to see who might be able to help out on certain issues.</p> <p>8.11 Clare Kingston suggested that the informal meetings could look at a specific issue and call together relevant contacts to deal with the issue at the time if appropriate.</p> <p>8.12 Colin Fletcher felt that some sort of get together was needed to hold the group together over time.</p> <p>8.13 Nick Carter commented that the district council is best placed to take responsibility for keeping the group together, and suggested not bringing south and vale together as it would mean a loss of locality focus .</p> <p>8.14 Di Batchelor said that the value for her is knowing and understanding who she could work with in the wider community. She suggested that a virtual partnership, such as through social media, could be useful.</p> <p>8.15 Ken Hall said that the OALC find the partnership reports useful.</p> <p>8.16 There was general agreement that Option 4 (Disband the partnership and put no alternative arrangements in place) was not an option. Option 1 (Merge South and Vale partnerships and continue to meet on a quarterly basis) is not considered a realistic option as there are specific identities for South and Vale. The group are interested to know what the Vale Partnership decide to do.</p> <p>8.17 The meeting agreed that members don't need to get together to note reports although a more informal meeting to discuss topical issues, such as the Census Data being released this year could be more useful, maybe in late autumn / December time.</p> <p><b>The following was discussed and broadly agreed as the way forward for the South Oxfordshire Partnership:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● SOP would hold an informal networking meeting for South only and include some other key agencies such as Age UK and Extended Schools.</li> <li>● A meeting to be scheduled for late autumn, to be held at the district council offices, with a review to take place after this to see if another should be scheduled for Spring 2013.</li> <li>● The meeting will focus on a few key topical issues likely to be of</li> </ul>	<p>A Richardson</p> <p>A Richardson</p>
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	<p>interest to all members with short presentations to be given: Census Data, Core Strategy update and Welfare benefits briefing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All members to provide a short update to highlight their work with a particular focus on whether they can add value to others and how others can add value to their work.</li> <li>• All members will provide a written summary of their short updates and this will be sent out, with other relevant papers from the meeting, by the council.</li> <li>• Those attending should be in positions who command resources and provide strategic input to their organisations.</li> </ul>	<p>S Truman</p> <p>ALL</p> <p>ALL</p>
<p><b>9.</b></p>	<p><b>Update on the Core Strategy</b></p> <p>9.1 Ann Ducker updated the group on the Core Strategy and reported that the Inspector is still looking at the document. The Core Strategy is due to be confirmed and agreed in the autumn.</p> <p>9.2 Once the Core Strategy is adopted the council can then look at site allocations.</p>	
<p><b>10.</b></p>	<p><b>SOP board members updates</b></p> <p>10.1 SOHA – Richard Peacock reported that the Extra Care scheme in Thame is the first in South Oxfordshire for people who may go into residential care or buy into the equity of a home. Richard will send more information to the group. The Extra Care scheme is run by Housing 21 with a person on site 24/7. SOHA staff are spending one day out of the office this week to do volunteering at a variety of local charities. SOHA are trying to understand the new welfare benefits system and Ann Ducker suggested that the wider community would benefit from briefing on this.</p> <p>10.2 OCC - Nick Carter mentioned that providing superfast broadband across the county is an issue and BT have a monopoly on this with coverage of seventy per cent of the county, some matched funding had been provided by OCC and some by DEFRA. The project in Benson and Ewelme has been delayed.</p> <p>10.3 Oxfordshire Churches Together – Colin Fletcher reported that the Oxfordshire Stronger Communities Alliance (OSCA) bid with ORCC and OCVA didn't get accepted but the OCC tender included joint infrastructure and closer collaboration. The Thriving Families project (working with police, health workers and other relevant</p>	<p>R Peacock</p>

	<p>agencies) needs a lot of genuine partnership working to help tackle truancy, employment and improve other aspects of community life. There is a discussion taking place within the diocese regarding the boundaries of the Bishop of Dorchester and the Bishop of Reading which would mean that the Bishop of Dorchester would become responsible for the whole of the County (with the exception of the City) as far as the Church of England is concerned so incorporating into his Episcopal Area half of SODC and the whole of the Vale.</p> <p>10.4 ORCC – Meryl Smith reported that the OCC seminar on community transport strategy was useful in promoting rural transport. ORCC are looking at neighbourhood planning and other options for communities to get involved in planning. ORCC were involved in a successful short term project to look at community support for people with dementia and hope to roll it out to other communities and support networks and are looking for funding. ORCC are also working with OCVA on a Community Action project funding workshops on social media and community networking for example through cafés, coffee mornings and markets.</p>	
<p><b>11.</b></p>	<p><b>Any other business</b></p> <p>11.1 The SOP meeting scheduled for Wednesday 12 September 2012 is cancelled</p> <p>11.2 The proposed date for the informal networking meeting of the SOP group is Wednesday 12 December at 5.30pm. More information to follow.</p>	<p>A Richardson</p>
	<p><b>Proposed date of SOP Networking Group meeting</b></p> <p><b>Wednesday 12 December 2012</b>  <b>5.30pm – 7.30pm</b>  <b>South Oxfordshire District Council Offices</b></p>	