

Social Inclusion Partnership South East (SIPSE)

Minutes of Meeting 18th May 2004

Venue: Community Fund, Guildford

Present:

| | | |
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| Robert Jones, Chair | (RJ) | West Sussex VOLG/RAISE |
| Paul Abey | (PA) | Housing Corporation |
| Mike Holdgate | (MH) | S.E. Funding Forum |
| Mark Bilsborough | (MB) | GOSE |
| Abdul Chaudhary | (AC) | SEREN |
| Philip Craig | (PC) | Regional Assembly |
| Pat Dark | (PD) | Public Health |
| Pam McHale | (PM) | SEEDA |
| Charles Freeman | (CF) | SE England Cultural Consortium |
| Angela Hammond | (AH) | GOSE |
| Garry Hunter | (GH) | Legal Services |
| Nigel Smallbone | (NS) | RAISE (alt. Catherine Johnstone) |
| Phillippa Saray | (PS) | Community Fund |
| Yvette Ortel | (YO) | SIPSE Project Manager |
| Diane Ruban | (DR) | SIPSE Secretariat |
| Nick Woolfenden | (NW) | Guest Speaker, Regional Assembly |

Apologies:

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|---------------|------|---------------------------|
| Janet Novak | (JN) | GOSE |
| Hilary Omissi | (HO) | GOSE (alt. Lesley Taylor) |
| John Stevens | (JS) | Equal Voices |
| Ron Turner | (RT) | Health Development Agency |

2. Minutes of last meeting

Minutes agreed as accurate and approved.

Matters arising:

4(i) The Chair apologised for the speed with which our involvement in the Integrated Regional Framework (IRF) discussions had to take place and thanked those SIPSE members who were able to contribute – particularly in the IRF steering group. He reminded members of the importance of the IRF with its role in measuring regional policies, strategies & regional bodies on progress towards sustainability, particularly in light of SIPSE's role to champion social inclusion in the region. The success of the concentrated effort is that all the social objectives in the IRF now have social indicators attached with further development to come (i.e. linking with Home Office indicators on access to services).

3. Philip Craig & Nick Woolfenden - The South East Plan & Social Issues

Background:

The South East Plan is the name given to the Regional Spatial Strategy and will replace existing regional planning guidance (RPG9). It will set out changes needed to improve the quality of life in the South East England region over the next 20+ years.

The aim is to produce a more holistic document, better able to recognise the role of wider social issues in the implementation of planning and transport policy.

Throughout April and May 2004, a programme of workshops for regional stakeholders were held. The events involved key stakeholders and will inform the consultation draft of the South East Plan, which is expected in early 2005. Delegates discussed a wide range of issues and included a social issues paper that raised a wide range of issues – i.e. health, social inclusion, effects of an ageing population. Other issues, such as criminal justice, were excluded from the social issues paper as it was felt that this was an area that was influenced more at a national or local level rather than regional.

A number of key issues arose from debate on the social issues paper, including: quality of life; balancing sustainable communities; location of services; improving public and private access to facilities; proactive planning; and improvement of access to existing facilities.

The SE Plan is perceived to become the 'plan of all plans', though it will not attempt to change legislation, as any such changes should take place at national or local level.

SIPSE's comments on the Social Issues paper & SE Plan:

PC invited views on the contents of the Plan. Has anything been missed? What practical advice could be given by SIPSE?

PM felt that equalities, diversity and community cohesion needed to be included in key documents, e.g. ethnicity and ageing had only been touched upon in SE Plan.

MB pointed out that the indices of multiple deprivation would need to be updated. PC said that this would be done.

MH spoke of the need for a link between communities and governments aims. Community capacity building already has a thread through all work that is done, but is it really adding value? AH, PM and MH have just started work on research into communities, in the future this could be built into the Plan.

NS questioned why crime had been left out when not only do indicators show that the fear of crime has spread extensively throughout the region, but it is also included in the Social Inclusion Statement? The Plan should be viewed as opportunity to mainstream Social inclusion information. Again PC reiterated the question of what difference a regional plan could make to the crime agenda, which is delivered at national and local levels.

NW explained that Social Inclusion is not to be a separate entity within itself, it has been separated out artificially for the purpose of scrutiny, and it is to then be integrated back into the mainstream areas.

PC concluded that he would be working on the SE Plan throughout the summer; further discussions are to take place in the autumn, at which time the Plan will be returned to SIPSE for debate.

Action: Response invited from SIPSE members to the Assembly by 28th May 2004, Secretariat to send reminder e-mail within the week

Agreed: Our discussion from this meeting would serve as SIPSE's feedback to the SE Plan consultation.

4. Feedback from Action Groups

(i) Abdul Chaudhary – BME Group and Asylum Seekers

The Group has begun inviting key colleagues (from BME backgrounds) working in the region to participate in their meetings. They are specifically looking at Race Equality within a general equalities framework and are drafting a positive statement of intent, outlining a strategic set of principles, (similar to the Reading Declaration), so that there is a Charter for race equality in the South East. The Group will be seeking to invite a sign up to this statement by regional agencies

The Group is also looking to ask SIPSE partner organisations to identify individuals (of BME, Asylum Seeker or Traveller backgrounds) in positions of influence and leadership, for example, in their respective sectors who can be seen as 'champions', e.g. individuals sitting on Boards. The aim is to bring together a number of such individuals who would be willing to

- Recount their 'stories' of achieving some success in positions of leadership or influence
- Communicate how any barriers they faced were overcome
- Explore ways in which desired change can be facilitated within organisations

At present the information will be used informally. The Group plans to hold upto 2 seminars across the region in September/October time. The events are likely to be low key to be about what organisations are doing around the race equality area, (ensuring that any learning builds on existing practice in the region).

(ii) Nigel Smallbone - Older People

The Group has written to utility companies, asking them how they are spending 1% of their budgets on affordable warmth.

The group is looking at LSP Community Strategies and LPSAs to see how older people are referred to.

The Group is looking to hold a conference in October this year and will have to consider avenues for funding.

CJ is attending a conference where she will speak on older people champions and wave the SIPSE flag.

(iii) Yvette Ortel – Exclusion through Disability – *a focus on children & young people in the South East*

The awareness pack is almost complete; it will include case studies. The pack provides a mix and match opportunity to use the tools, as there are a variety of methods for delivery. The Group hopes to target, for example, the GOSE Board so that feedback can, in turn, be given to their individual groups.

Funding for the printing of the pack is still to be identified, though a launch event for the pack is planned for the summer. This may mean that there will be a presentation of the pack at the next SIPSE Main Committee meeting.

5. Business Plan

Nigel Smallbone and Yvette Ortel – Business Plan Rationale

NS and YO talked through 'Towards a Business Plan'. It did nothing new; the document pulled together the major documents that already existed, providing an audit trail so SIPSE could build on its past instead of tearing it up. For example, the mission statement was as previously agreed at an earlier SIPSE meeting, the definition of 'social inclusion' came from the Social Inclusion Statement and the definition of 'championing' comes from the action plan as amended.

The Business Plan proposed provides a structure which will prioritise actions, link the action groups currently not covered in 'Towards an Action Plan' to the main group and will help SIPSE and its Project Manager to meet objectives.

The Main Committee were invited to comment on the Business Plan:

The Chair suggested that new actions would be appropriate, as existing documentation does not cover SIPSE in its entirety – identifying where we are at now and where we want to go.

A membership process now needs to be created - people/orgs have left/changed while others have asked to join but been asked to wait. The mapping of gaps and welcoming/approaching new members would need to link with the communication strategy.

MB thought the Action Groups need to be a part of the Business Plan. He also thought the language was non-inclusive and that rather than SIPSE 'providing leadership' we should stress the emphasis on 'championing'. As the current language had been pulled from the original Social Inclusion Statement, perhaps now was an opportunity to update the original statement and have a new one for the year 2005?

MH suggested that funding for social inclusion should also be considered. People are aware of the funding streams, but access is still blocked. SIPSE could 'champion' easier accessibility to funding by looking at ways to make funding more accessible. This was an area that could be looked at by SIPSE along with the SE Funding Forum.

AC noted it would be of help if SIPSE could request members to identify the non-financial resources and capacity they has access to. AC suggested a 'soft audit' on

the individual members of SIPSE, to ascertain what resources were available for social inclusion within respective discrete organisations.

YO confirmed that this had been done and emphasised that funding is not seen as the only way that members contribute to SIPSE.

MB thought it would be better to firstly look at what the Action Groups and Main Committee wanted to achieve within the Business Plan, how much the proposals will cost and to then investigate how funding could be provided.

Action: AC and YO to work together on mapping SIPSE resources

Within the draft Business Plan MB observed that 5.2c was not necessary as a separate action, as this area was a subset of the actions 5.2d and 5.2e.

MH suggested that 4b) could be delivered in part through more engaging methods such as 'Theatre for Change'; such an event would not only be inclusive, but also innovative.

AC asked how the Business Plan was to go forward? It was suggested that actions be assigned to certain members - it would be of use if members were willing to assign themselves to certain suggestions.

Action: YO, NS & RJ to take forward feedback from the meeting, develop the draft further by identifying specific action and suggest who might do what, involving SIPSE members as it progresses.

6. AOB

MB was invited to speak on the Regional Housing Strategy, which was produced last year. The Strategy was not very strong and was 'safe' in its approach. Another strategy is due in May 2005 and this time it can be more contentious. A Green Paper has already been published and 5 consultation events are being run - the closing date for comments is the 11th June. A draft strategy will be published in the autumn, after which there will be further consultation events. By March 2005, all consultations will have been completed in time for the Strategy's publication in the May.

Action: Agenda item for Sept.: Discussion on Regional Housing Strategy

PS informed the meeting that the Community Fund was undergoing a programme of consultation with communities prior to its impending merger with the New Opportunities Fund. The smaller of the events are being held on the 13th and 15th of July. Two larger events are to be held on the 19th July at Ashford Centre of Commerce and 22nd July at Reading Town Hall. If Committee members do not receive a direct invite could they let PS know?

Action: PS to send an e-mail confirming the details of the events to YO for circulation to SIPSE members

AC informed SIPSE members of 2 events SEREN are holding. Invites were passed to members. If anyone wishes to attend, could they pass their details to YO, so that YO can co-ordinate replies to AC.

Action: YO to co-ordinate and pass to AC any delegate information

PD distributed for completion a consultation leaflet on 'choosing health'. The leaflet can also be found on the Department of Health website www.dh.gov.uk

Next Main Committee meeting is to be held on Thursday the 9th September, at the Government Office, Guildford