

West of England Partnership
11 September 2009

PRINCIPLES OF PARTNERSHIP WORKING ARISING FROM DISCUSSIONS WITH SEEPS

Purpose of report

1. To report on the outcome of further discussions with a Social, Economic & Environmental Board Members (SEEPs) following the disagreement at the June Board.

Outcomes of Discussions

2. The attached draft (Appendix A) 'Principles for Working in Partnership were prepared in conjunction with SEEPs to assist in future with the operation of the Board. Among other things, they propose ways of dealing with potential conflicts of interest given that Board Members have various interests and responsibilities.
3. The Board are asked to give their views and recommended to adopt Principles to support the operation of the Board.
4. The discussions with the SEEPs also identified which SEEP Board Members will lead their engagement with its Committees/Boards and major projects, as follows. These arrangements are based on the earlier report attached at Appendix B, which was adopted by the Board.
 - 4.1 Joint Transport Committee
Major Transport Projects
Local Transport Plan
Sonia Mills
 - 4.2 Planning, Housing & Communities Board
Single Conversation
John Savage
 - 4.3 Employment & Skills Board
John Savage
 - 4.4 MAA
John Savage
5. In addition GWE Business West will continue to meet quarterly with Leaders of Council and with Local Authority Chief Executives.
6. All SEEPs asked to receive all papers for the Board's Joint Committees/Boards and reserved the right to attend appropriate meetings for particular items.
7. The SEEPs 6 weekly meetings with the PARTNERSHIP Chief Executive and relevant officers will also continue.

8. The SEEPs aim to nominate for the office of Partnership Vice Chair at this meeting.

Recommendation

That the board:

- i) Adopt 'Principles for Working in Partnership' based on Appendix A
- ii) Note the SEEP 'lead' roles.

Terry Wagstaff
Chief Executive

S:\WEP\WEP meetings\Board\September 2009\SEEPS Principles 22.07.09.doc

West of England: Principles for working in Partnership

1. The diversity of interests represented on the Board is a key strength of the West of England Partnership. The job of the Partnership is to manage and benefit from the differing views on how best to meet the interests of communities.
 2. A register of Board Members interests will be maintained and Members will make declarations at meetings should any part of the agenda affect their interests.
 3. Any member of the Board may call for a report or discussion to be included on the Board's agenda.
 4. Social, Economic & Environmental Partners (SEEPs) and Strategic Organisations are represented on the Board and have the opportunity to contribute to the work of the Partnership's Joint Committees and Boards.
 5. SEEPs are selected, and their nominations reviewed annually, for the Partnership Board using the following criteria:
 - able to contribute to the key issues the Partnership will be addressing based on their skills and knowledge;
 - able to make a top-rate personal contribution;
 - drawn from across the West of England;
 - achieving a balance of representation across the Partnership and its Committees and Boards;
 - able to represent sector interests in the West of England.
 6. SEEPs and Strategic Organisations contribute to finalising the Partnership Board Annual Work Programme and Forward Plan and these documents assist them in planning and prioritising their contribution to the work of the Partnership.
 7. SEEPs and Strategic Organisations have meetings:
 - quarterly with Leaders and with Chief Executives of the Councils
 - six-weekly with the Chief Executive of the West of England Partnership.And, GWE Business West are meeting Leaders of Council quarterly.
- These meetings enable SEEPs and Strategic Organisations to jointly review progress, anticipate forthcoming action and identify how they will prioritise their contributions. All of these meetings enable informal exchanges, particularly on contentious issues.
8. Whilst Board Members are normally expected to support the direction, policy and priorities determined by the Partnership, it is recognised that SEEPs, in undertaking their professional and / or representative responsibilities, may be obliged to support a different position on particular issues.
 9. To minimise such circumstances, and to deal with them should they arise, the Board Members will:
 - contribute fully to debates at Board Meetings when direction, policy and priorities are under discussion so that their perspective is fully explored;

- seek the inclusion of a report or discussion on any contentious matter, at either informal or formal meetings, where otherwise the matter may not be addressed;
 - where they may be obliged to support a different position on particular issues in undertaking their professional and / or representative responsibilities, raise and discuss their intentions with the Board and/or a relevant Board Partner(s) as far in advance as possible
 - in the event of supporting a different position, in doing so will clearly state their professional and/or representative capacity.
10. Board members serving as the Chair or Vice Chair of the Board are expected to support the Partnership's objectives, policies and programmes.
 11. The Partnership Board recognises the importance of ensuring the opportunity for SEEPs to engage with networks relevant to their role and contribution on the Board. The meetings and arrangements describes at 4, 6 and 7 above will assist in ensuring they are well-informed about the Partnership's objectives and work programme.
 12. The Board recognises the need to keep SEEPs informed of matters which require an urgent response, especially in the case of deadlines set by Government and its Agencies.

TW v2 amended 22/07/09

Engagement with SEEPs & Strategic Organisations

Recommendation

That the proposed further arrangements for engagement with SEEPs (Social, Economic and Environmental Partners) and strategic organisations set out in the report be adopted, to strengthen the capacity, reach and influence of the Partnership.

Proposal adopted by the West of England Partnership Board

1. At its last meeting the Partnership adopted the following arrangements to ensure greater engagement of the SEEPs:
 - Programmed meetings and workshops for the SEEPs' organisations by the Partnership Office
 - Actions to implement their engagement across the Joint Committees, Boards and Groups. This would normally involve attendance for specific items, particularly at the development stage.
 - Further engagement of the Leaders of Council and Executive Members with strategic partner organisations on key developments, submissions and responses important to the sub-region and/or SEEPs' organisations or sectors
 - Closer involvement in communicating and promoting the objectives and outcomes of the Partnership, and the interests of the West of England.

Further actions

2. Following the second officer meeting with the SEEPs, the Board is now recommended to adopt these further actions:
 - The inclusion of the Regional Development Agency (SWRDA), the Homes & Communities Agency (HCA) and the Government Office (GOSW) in these arrangements as observers, in addition to the existing SEEPs representing the following: Business; Higher Education; Health; Environment; Voluntary Sector Infrastructure Organisations; and, a Social Partner.
 - The nomination of the seventh SEEP from amongst serving business people in the professional services sector or other sector suggested by the SEEPs.
 - Partnership Officers to identify in advance when SEEPs and Strategic Organisations (SEEPS/SOs) should be engaged with officers and Members at the development and decision-making stages of proposals - especially on transport, spatial planning, economy and skills issues, including key

developments, submissions and responses. This would ensure they are more informed and influential, and be more effective in speaking publicly in support of the Partnership's ambitions, objectives, priorities and programmes. This would not involve additional meetings, but would involve ensuring the SEEPs/SOs are notified well in advance of appropriate meetings.

- On this basis, Partnership Officers to anticipate when SEEPs/SOs should meet relevant officers, Chief Executives, Leaders of Council, Member Joint Committees, Boards and Committees for specific items, and periodically for planning and review.
- Future Joint Investment Planning at times will require particular engagement of Leaders and Executive Members with SWRDA and HCA.
- The need to ensure the Partnership Board agenda includes more opportunities to debate key future and emerging priorities and developments, and policy and investment programmes.
- The importance of ensuring opportunities are to identified and programmed for the involvement of SEEPs/SOs in communicating and promoting the objectives and outcomes of the Partnership, and the interests of the West of England.
- The need to ensure the Partnership's Joint Committees, Boards and Specialist Groups continue to engage with relevant specialist partner organisations and interest groups as appropriate.
- In the immediate future Partnership Officers to arrange for:
 - SEEPs/SOs to meet Leaders to reinforce this joint commitment;
 - Chief Executives to review arrangements for cross-party briefing on Partnership matters; and
 - Arrangements to be made for the Chair to present the Partnerships priorities and programmes to the West of England Initiative.
- The Partnership gives its views on the revised chart of the Partnership arrangements at Appendix 1.

3. Appendix 2 lists SEEPs, observers and other partners for information.

Terry Wagstaff
Chief Executive

West of England Partnership Governance and Delivery

A Councils		Cabinets	
BANES	Bristol	North Somerset	South Gloucestershire

B Strategic Partnership Board
Leaders of Council plus 2 Councillors from each Council; Social, Economic and Environmental Partners, Strategic Organisations/Observers

C Council Leaders	Joint Executive Committees	Boards		Specialist Groups	SEEPs, Partners & Strategic Organisations
	Transport Waste Management	Planning, Homes & Communities Board	Employment & Skills Board	Culture, Leisure & Tourism Rural Strategy	
	Cabinet Members	Cabinet Members	Employers, Economic Partners, & Agencies	Cabinet Members Non-Executive Strategic Partners & Agencies	
Work with Social, Economic and Environmental Partners and Strategic Partners					

D Joint Scrutiny Committee
Transport; Waste; Planning, Housing & Communities; Economy & Skills
Cross-Party Members, Strategic Partners and Agencies

E Delivery Vehicle (being developed)	Homes West
Commission delivery of transport, waste & housing infrastructure (accountable to Partnership Board)	RSL Consortium delivering affordable homes

F Specialist Officer Groups	Partnership Office
---	---------------------------

West of England Partnership: Social, Economic & Environmental Partners, Observers and other Partners

Engaged and/or to be called upon by the Partnership, its Joint Committees, Boards, Specialist Groups and Joint Scrutiny

Transport

Industry:

Bus and rail operators
Network Rail

Environmental interests:

Campaign for Better Transport (was Transport 2000)
Friends of the Earth
CPRE

Other:

Business West
UWE
SW TUC
Community Action (rural interests)

Observers (government and its agencies):

SWRDA
GOSW
SWRA
Highways Agency
Gloucestershire County Council
Wiltshire County Council
Somerset County Council
Welsh Assembly
Mendip District Council
Cotswold District Council

Waste

Industry/commerce:

Environmental Services Association
Business West

Environmental interests:

Friends of the Earth

Observers:

GOSW
Environment Agency
Natural England

Planning, Housing and Communities

Partners:

Business West
House Builders Federation
National Housing Federation
National Landlords Association: Wessex Branch
Homes West

Industry:

Wessex Water
Bristol Water
Western Power
Bristol Port
Bristol Airport

Other:

Friends of the Earth
CPRE
SW TUC
Shelter
(Housing Associations)
(Universities)
(Consultants with specialist knowledge)

Observers:

GOSW
Homes & Communities Agency
SWRDA
Natural England
Environment Agency

Economy, Employment and Skills

Partners

Business West
Business Link
Federation of Small Businesses
CBI
Universities – knowledge transfer / business engagement
FE sector - knowledge transfer / business engagement
Science City
Social Enterprise Works
South West TUC
Networks: eg Aerospace Forum, SW Screen, BETS (Bristol Environmental Technology Services)

Observers:

SWRDA
Jobcentre Plus
Learning & Skills Council

Culture, Leisure & Tourism

Partners:

Arts Council South West
Culture South West
Museum, Libraries and Archives Council
South West Screen
South West Tourism
Sport England
WESPORT

Observers:

SWRDA
GOSW