



...continued from inside

If you could give one piece of advice to a member of a council executive what would it be?

Since the 2000 Local Government Act there has been some confusion about the role of the Executive member as a promoter of change in their areas. Executive members need to be more proactive in supporting their areas and schemes for change which support local well being. If there is a clear separation between the Executive and regulatory roles of councillors (as set out in the 2000 Act) then Executive members can be more confident in taking a more proactive role.

Contact Details

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The unabridged version of this interview is available on the PtP website.

LAA PLUS membership discount



One of PtP's roles is to link up capacity building support across the region. We have struck a deal with the LAA PLUS Network and can now offer a 25% discount on the subscription fee.

LAA PLUS is a national, practitioner-led network of local authorities and LSPs, offering comprehensive delivery support to LAA practitioners. Through PLUS you can access:

- An annual programme of events & monthly e-bulletin
- 8 hours of dedicated delivery support
- The LAA helpline
- Case studies, briefing papers and other practical materials

“ The opportunity to share, discuss and be challenged has prompted me to significantly change my approach to key issues within LAA development. Paul Robinson, Project Manager, Lancashire County Council ”

- Opportunities to influence LAA policy
- An informal mentoring network providing peer-to-peer support

PtP and PLUS ran a very successful event on building sustainability in LAAs and Sustainable Community Strategies last September. We are now exploring joint work to provide LSP and LAA support on issues such as cross-boundary working and performance management in two-tier areas.

For more information, check out the LAA PLUS website www.laa-plus.net or contact John Houghton on 020 7756 7627 or john.houghton@sharedintelligence.net

Learning Pool & Modern Councillor



Learning Pool is an e-learning exchange company for the public sector. Learning Pool allows you to create, share and access support for council officers and elected members using the internet. Over 330 local authorities now use the Learning Pool to provide effective and efficient training for officers and members.



'Modern Councillor' is one of the services that the Learning Pool offers. It is designed for elected members to develop their skills in a cost effective and efficient way, whether they are old hands or new to local government. It is a convenient tool which provides bite-sized learning on hot topics in the privacy of their own homes. Modern Councillor also offers a learning catalogue of on-line evidence based courses, which can be revisited and studied at your own pace. An example course is 'understanding community leadership', which focuses on achieving effective leadership and community cohesion. The course looks at how LSP's and LAA's contribute to community leadership.

Modern Councillor is funded for a two-year trial period by the south east regional improvement partnership. South east elected members who would like to access the service should contact their Member Support Offices who will provide a username and password. Visit Learning Pool at www.learningpool.co.uk or Modern Councillor at www.moderncouncillor.com

IML Instant Voting Kit

The interactive voting equipment that was used at the conference was supplied by IML Ltd. The system provides an instance audience response, which is generated through a handheld keypad. For more information about using this equipment for your own events contact sales@iml.co.uk or phone 01428 727476.



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This programme is led by South East Employers and Shared Intelligence.



PtP Conference supports forward thinking...

“ PtP did a good job breaking down a complicated issue into something non public bodies can understand and relate to ”

Progress through Partnership held its first annual conference on 22nd November 2007 at the Brit Oval in London. The event was a huge success bringing together partners, practitioners and public bodies from across the region to look at the future for local strategic partnerships and what PtP can do to support them. PtP used an innovative

interactive format, incorporating the latest voting technology to capture the views of the audience instantaneously. There were also presentations from practitioners working at grass-root level, consultants, CLG and GOSE. We will be using the feedback to develop the programme further and we are putting questions raised by delegates to government agencies. The conference event report is available on the PtP website.

“ PtP are doing very useful work and LSPs should take advantage of it ”



“ Fantastic networking, we were able to get to know each other even better & better. I can now pick up the phone to a whole load of new people and feel less isolated ”

Future of PtP

PtP is working to secure funding so that we can continue into 2008 and beyond. We are working on proposals to be submitted as part of the regional efficiency and improvement strategy. The strategy will be submitted in early March and a decision on funding is anticipated in late March. In the meantime the PtP team will concentrate on helping partnerships use the funds PtP has made available to them.

Has your Partnership got a Development Plan?

We have now extended the deadline to allow LSP's to spend their individual and pooled draw down credits up until July 2008. PtP needs to account for all of the money being spent and partnerships will need to complete a

Partnership Development Plan in order to guarantee access to PtP credits. A template plan is available from the website and the deadline for completion of these plans is 5pm on the **14th March 2008**. If the credits are not

claimed funds will be reallocated to work coordinated by PtP directly.

Well done to all those LSPs who have completed their activities. Please ensure you re-claim your costs and submit your invoices promptly.

Developing Partnerships – Case Studies from the Region

Leading Change

“Leading Change” was the focus of an event hosted by the Basingstoke and Deane LSP to engage elected members and the Board members of partner organisations.

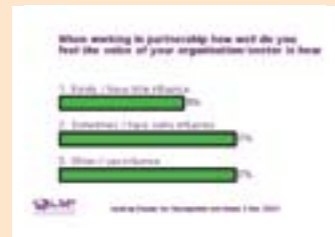


The aims were to raise awareness and start to prepare for the new government expectations of partnership working; where local people are put at the heart of services.

By using presentations and IML “voting” equipment, the scene was set to explore the opportunities and barriers to partnership working. Key actions coming from the discussions included the need to:

- Communicate more widely and more effectively by targeting messages at different audiences (e.g. elected members via newsletters and overview & scrutiny committees)
- Review LSP membership to ensure strong leadership and representation

To find out more about Basingstoke & Dean Strategic Partnership visit www.basingstoke.lsp.org



Using Modern Technology

Building sustainable communities is a key topic for LSPs and the Gosport Partnership is using its PtP funding to organise ‘Planitsustainability’ training, delivered by Pixelfountain. This training has been developed in the northwest, is nationally recognised and included in the government’s LAA toolkit.



Planitsustainability is a learning simulation which encourages players to realise how the decisions they make will affect social progress, the environment and the economy. Planitsustainability is an interactive game, whereby you work as a group to change an unsustainable virtual community into a more sustainable one. Each player in the group takes on a different role and has a budget which they have to allocate on a yearly basis in the most sustainable way possible. At the end of the session the team review the sustainability of their imaginary community.

Partnerships Innovative County Conference

All 6 Local Strategic Partnerships in Oxfordshire are holding a ‘Partnerships in Oxfordshire’ Conference on February 8th. The objective of the conference is to bring together a range of people with interest in and influence over partnerships in the County to explore the legislative and strategic context, contemporary issues and choices facing partnerships in 2008. The conference provides the opportunity for Oxfordshire partnerships to all have their say about the existing situation and the future direction.



More information is available on each case-study on the PtP website.

One County Sustainable Community Strategy

East Sussex has coordinated the use of PtP resources through their LSP Coordinator and Chair network. An Integrated East Sussex Sustainable Community Strategy is being developed which will create one SCS for the whole county including a chapter for each of the districts. This will feed into the development of their next generation LAA. The group organised a ‘Dynamics of Place’ workshop in September 07, making use of contacts developed through the PtP programme to draw in expert speakers. This event created the opportunity for some in depth discussion and analysis of the county’s strengths and challenges and helped develop the base-line information which will help set the context for the strategy. The group is now developing a second event in February for LSP partners and elected members to explore better joint working and possible priorities for the next generation LAA.



Interview with Janice Morphet

Janice Morphet has extensive experience and training in Planning, and has worked in a variety of roles from the front line to senior management. She is currently a member of the RTPI General Assembly and serves on the ODA Planning Decision Committee. Acting as an independent consultant Janice has a wealth of knowledge in spatial planning & local government.

Introduce yourself

I started life with a sociology degree and moved quickly into planning, working in an outer London Borough and taking a part time planning course. I was Chief Executive in Rutland when it became a unitary authority and have been fortunate to have experience of a very rural area as well as Tower Hamlets. I have been a senior adviser in central government supporting local authorities through the changes that followed the implementation of the 2000 Local Government Act and the introduction of e-government. I have always combined my working life with writing and speaking on planning, local government and sustainability. I am now a consultant, mainly in the public sector.

What is the most important thing you think that local authorities should be considering in light of the LG Act?

Most local authorities still need to get to grips with the implications of the 2007 Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act, and the new Constitutional Guidance on the Act has been helpful in outlining the Acts’ implications. I think that the new duty to involve will be most challenging not least as it includes a more rigorous approach to the collection and use of evidence. The integration between the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) and Local Development Framework (LDF) also need changes in local practice and culture. For the 2008 Act, it will be the new economic duty that will be of interest. Local authorities will be looking to see what additional requirements it places on them. We know that the regional partnerships will be there to help but this role may come as a major change in emphasis in many local authorities.

What do you see as the purpose of a Community Strategy?

It is now called a Sustainable Community Strategy. This change in name reflects a development in its role. When Community Strategies were first introduced in 2000, local authorities were required to produce them but there was not a lot of discussion on their role and content. Now a few years on, the new statutory guidance following the 2007 Act and the LAA Operational Guidance (2007) move the SCS into a central role inside the local community. It has become the place where the local vision for the next 30 years needs to be set out. This is a statement of ambition based on the bounded reality of evidence and some indication of what works. With the development of MAA’s the SCS takes on a wider role as the local area’s ‘pitch’ into the sub-region and region. In addition, the SCS is the place that identifies what is going to be delivered in the locality, by which organisation and by when.

Do you think that local authorities have yet recognised the need to align the LAA/LDF to ensure they complement each other?

From what I have seen there is very little interplay between the LAA and the LDF. LAAs have primarily but not exclusively been focussed on revenue funded activities in supporting older people, children and communities. There was an initial intention to widen the ‘place’ component in the LAA. In some ways, the alignment between the LAA and LDF comes from their common roles as local delivery tools of the LSP and their vision and programme for the area contained in the SCS. This lack of relationship

between the LAA and LDF has been compounded in two tier areas, where the LDF is a district function and the LAA lies with the county on behalf of all the authorities. Nevertheless this does call for greater integration and awareness from staff working on both LAAs and LDFs as there is an increasing need to utilise these tools to a common end.

How do you see the role of an LSP in developing effective LDF’s?

In the new local government architecture, the LSP has a significant role in leading the SCS, and as the SCS needs to embrace the work on the LDF Core Strategy, there is a new and inevitable relationship developing here. In streamlining LDF’s (CLG 2007), it is suggested that they are both prepared using the same process, drawing on the same evidence base, using the LDF as the delivery mechanism for the SCS. This integration could be initially challenging, as the processes for the SCS does not include the same tests of soundness required by the LDF. However, the new duty to involve brings the processes together more and the tests of soundness require evidence of more integrated working for the LDF be successful.

In Effective Practice in Spatial Planning, (a study which I led for RTPI, CLG, Rowntree and the GLA), it was recommended that each LSP establish an infrastructure sub committee. This would allow there to be a common capital investment programme across the area and a means by which the local public service providers could start to combine their investment to the community’s benefit. The LDF can include this as part of its delivery strategy.

continued overleaf...

¹‘Creating Strong Safe and Prosperous Communities’, CLG November 2007