

## **WEST SUFFOLK LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

**25 NOVEMBER 2009**

### **John Griffiths' Speech**

**Thank you very much for coming to the third Annual Conference of West Suffolk LSP, here in Palace House. We have chosen a new location this year so that people get a good glimpse of different areas and locations in West Suffolk.**

**You will now have heard a little of the history of this building and hope you will take advantage of Simon's offer for a tour and also to look at the stables opposite and plans for their future.**

**I am very pleased to present this report on the activities of WSLSP during the last year. Since November when we met last we have been very busy with new issues and projects.**

**We completed the two year Action Plan in March achieving 51 targets out of 76 and all the ones not achieved have been carried forward to the new Action Plan which will run for the current financial year.**

**I am now going to describe some of the things that we have done during the last year and will be doing over the next year.**

**Under the theme *Stronger, safer and sustainable communities we have continued* to support projects which addresses alcohol abuse under the group 'Respect Alcohol Respect Yourself' (RARY) and we worked with the Western Suffolk Community Safety Partnership (CSP) on the media campaign which ran over Christmas 2008 and into the new year. This was to raise awareness of the dangers of excessive alcohol intake. We are also working with the CSP and Trading Standards on visits to retail outlets to check on sales of alcohol to under age young people. This is beginning to work effectively with recent visits achieving 100% no sales.**

**We have also initiated with West Suffolk Hospital through the prolific offenders scheme a screening programme at A and E to identify and screen those presenting as a result of violence with a view to identifying alcohol related issues and help them to reduce alcohol intake in the future. The 'Think smart, Drink smart' programme is also continuing, which is an interactive course run by West Suffolk MIND to get people to think about their alcohol use.**

**The SOS Bus will commence operating in Newmarket this month on one night per week to help people, who have become vulnerable and in difficulties during the night time economy. We have funded the SOS Bus Partnership with over £50,000.**

We also consider that our rural areas are important and we have given support by creating and also an information pack about starting a Community café, which can be internet cafes for young people or coffee facility for older people, and a Village Welcome Pack which is a template to gather information for new residents. Our commitment to rural issues will continue with our next forum to be held on 19 March at Lavenham Village Hall, so note the date in your diaries.

Community engagement is also very important to us at WSLSP, and today is one of those events specifically to start the review of the community strategy. We also held a Forum in March specifically about community engagement by the Action Group which operates for community engagement, and which now incorporates rural issues. We also now have other Action Groups for RARY mentioned earlier, skills, mental health, and children and young people.

Climate Change is also an issue we are trying to address and are working with the sustainable development officers of the three local authorities and many other organisations as a result of our climate change conference last year.

**We have also been active for healthier communities in the area of Health Improvement.** Our HIP/HOP group were out on the streets of Bury, Sudbury and Mildenhall in June publicising healthy living including falls prevention, exercise regimes, blood pressure checks, and a variety of health information. They will be out again in December with the SOS bus for some of the procedures. 8 December in Newmarket, Bury on the 9<sup>th</sup> and Sudbury on the 10<sup>th</sup>.

The scheme to encourage disabled people use a gym has attracted 69 participants. The Fuel Poverty group is a big problem at present and we are addressing the issue and we have provided 19 small grants to people requiring wall or loft insulation, and issued an information leaflet for health operatives domestic properties.

**Within our achieving economic prosperity** we have also been funding some research on business parks around West Suffolk to identify skills needs, and this has identified many businesses known and unknown. This project will now offer some appropriate skills training on employers premises in the Forest Heath area to enable employees of small businesses learn some additional skills. We have also allocated £7,500 to a new apprenticeship scheme in partnership with St Edmundsbury Borough Council and the Suffolk Strategic Partnership. The will be a very flexible apprenticeship scheme which will allow up to six months training in a variety of businesses and voluntary organisations.

In addition we allocated £50,000 to specifically promote projects which will help to reduce the worst effects of the recession for some individuals. MENTA were funded to attract people recently made redundant who wish to consider setting up their own businesses, and

for those who go forward into self-employment pre-business bursaries will be given to suitable candidates.

In addition we are working with the Ipswich and Suffolk Credit Union to establish credit unions in Sudbury and either Newmarket or Mildenhall.

**Under our support to Children and Young People** we part funded another summer of turn up and play, which involved over 1,000 children over the West Suffolk area. We also funded the 'Supporting Contemporary Adolescence' group to send out their 'WOS-UP' truck to rural areas in Forest Heath and to Sudbury, engaging with 483 young people over the summer months.

For three years we have also funded the Young Carers Project which identifies and supports children who are carers of relatives usually parents who have alcohol problems. We have funded this scheme for another year taking them to March 2011.

Our Community Chest has been very successful with small grants to voluntary organisations and parish councils and I would now like you to see some images of some happy young people, first from Glemsford Toddler Group who received a grant for some play packs, Mildenhall Guides who held a world cultural day earlier in the year, and Suffolk Befrienders who work with children and young people with learning difficulties.

In August we agreed a further 17 small grants to a variety of small organisations and you have been provided with a list of these projects in your conference packs.

Since last November we have issued 29 press releases and circulated four E-newsletters.

The WSLSP has also been involved with Comprehensive Area Assessment, which is the new inspection regime from the audit commission, which is an assessment of the area and its facilities and services rather than the previous local authority inspection. We compiled a self-assessment of our work which was submitted to the audit commission. We are also currently carrying our own assessment using the IDeA self-evaluation tool and this has highlighted a number of gaps in our work and activities which are currently being addressed.

Others projects we have just agreed to fund are Flexibus, which will operate over the West Suffolk and Babergh East LSP areas for elderly and disabled people, two Community Engagement projects targeting young people and other 'hard to reach' groups, AFC Sudbury to develop community facilities, the 'Young People Afloat' Group who operate at Lackford Lakes to teach sailing to young people for new boats and other equipment to increase the number of people able to take part, and a 'lon

**Track Mobile trace drug devise' to assist in the detection of substance and drug related offences.**

**I want to finish by thanking you for listening and for working with the WSLSP over the last four years.**

**One last item is to announce the results of the election for representatives from the voluntary sector, to the WSLSP Board. Only two nominations were received from Sue Jay, of West Suffolk MIND, who had been a member for two years and Elaine Hewes, new to the Board from the Haverhill Volunteer Centre. Sue and Elaine have therefore been automatically elected to the Board for the next two years. This leaves one place left on the Board, so if anyone is interested please talk to David Wood or Hazel Pidsley.**

**Just one last photograph which may give you a little laugh before we move on is the opening of a new disabled toilet at the Sudbury Croquet Club, another grant from the community chest.**

**The next stage of today's conference are the workshops and David will explain what they are for and how they will work.**