

Scrutiny Committee – 1<sup>st</sup> September 2009

## 8. Local Strategic Partnership: South Somerset Together – Annual Review

*Portfolio Holder:* Councillor Tim Carroll, Leader of the Council  
*Corporate Director:* Mark Pollock, Corporate Director Economic Vitality  
*Lead Officer:* Helen Rutter, Head of Area Development (Area East)  
*Contact details:* [saveria.moss@southsomersettogether.gov.uk](mailto:saveria.moss@southsomersettogether.gov.uk)  
or (01963) 435004

### Purpose of the Report

This is a report to update members on the activities of the Local Strategic Partnership for the district from the last report to Scrutiny Committee in September 2008. Paull Robathan, Chairman of South Somerset Together will be presenting this report to members.

### Action Required

That members note the progress of the Local Strategic Partnership in delivering the Sustainable Community Strategy (2008-2026).

### Background

South Somerset Together is a non-statutory, non-executive body (an unincorporated association), with an independent Chairman, a full-time Coordinator and a membership of 35 individuals representing 24 public, private and voluntary sector organisations from across the district that meet six times a year. New partner organisations to the LSP in 2008/09 were RNAS Yeovilton, Natural England, the Yeovil Federation and the National Trust.

A main function of the LSP is to lead and influence the delivery of services and objectives as a conduit for change to improve the quality of life in South Somerset. Key to this is the development and implementation of *Shaping South Somerset – a Strategy for Sustainable Communities* that links with the current development of the Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2010-2026) and the Somerset Local Area Agreement Indicators (2008-2011).

All Partners have agreed to collaborate to address shared priorities together but retain their independent corporate status and therefore the Partners work by mutual cooperation, with SSDC acting as the host and lead body. This reflects national good practice.

### Funding

Since 2004 the LSP has received Second Homes income from Somerset County Council and SSDC. SSDC is the Accountable Body for the LSP. The contribution from SSDC to the LSP has been £45,390 in 2009/10. In 2008, the County Council changed its funding arrangement for the LSP by limiting the amount available to the Second Homes contribution from SSDC in 2007/8. In 2008 this was £43,429. In 2009 this has increased to £44,510 and the LSP has produced an Investment Plan to be submitted to the Somerset Strategic Partnership's Joint Board for approval on 28<sup>th</sup> September 2009. Most of the SSDC allocation is used to fund the core activities of the partnership including remuneration to the Chairman and the LSP Coordinator.

SSDC has committed to funding the LSP to 2010/11. An annual report of the LSP's funding for the financial year 2008-2009 is in **Appendix One** and Investment Plan 2009/10 in **Appendix Two**.

### **Activity of the LSP 2008/09**

#### **1. General Activity**

The activity of the LSP includes:

##### **1.1. Championing sustainability**

- The LSP adopted the Sustainable Community Strategy on 26<sup>th</sup> September 2008;
- Taking a lead in championing sustainability across the district, South Somerset Together held its third Annual General Meeting in June 2009, which included an Annual Report on progress made in 2008/09;
- The LSP launched the Sustainable Community Strategy by hosting the *Zero-Som* sustainability event held at the Yeovil Innovation Centre (**Appendix Three: Zero-Som Full Report**);
- The LSP is working closely with SSDC's Planning Policy to ensure that spatial aspects of the Sustainable Community Strategy influence the emerging Local Development Framework Core Strategy. LSP Partners have been invited to form part of a new LSP sub-group to develop an Infrastructure Delivery Plan for the district by April 2010.

##### **1.2. Commenting or lobbying on local, regional and national issues**

- The LSP has responded to various consultations including *Strengthening Local Democracy* (July 2009);
- It had an active role in South Somerset's process for developing the four proposals submitted to the Local Government Association (as Selector for the Government) under the Sustainable Communities Act 2007. The LSP will consider the remaining proposals put forward but not submitted to Government at its Board meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> September 2009, to consider how local Partners may be able to address these issues.

##### **1.3. Commissioning programmes that address priorities**

The LSP is currently supporting a range of activities linked to delivering shared commitments in the Sustainable Community Strategy. In 2008/09 the LSP completed 12 programmes from previous year's funding. A table with the details of the current activities supported by the LSP is included in **Appendix Four**.

In addition, the LSP is perfectly placed to enable Partners from all sectors to respond quickly and work together on joint bids for national funding. The LSP was able to facilitate the involvement of a range of service providers including Avon & Somerset Constabulary, Somerset County Council, SSDC, South Somerset Mind and the Somerset Polish Community Association to successfully draw down £865,139 over two years for support to Migrant Workers in South Somerset and other parts of the County (£314,094 immediately, with the rest to follow).

#### **2. Improving the LSP's Governance and structure**

##### **2.1. LSP Self-Assessment & Action Plan**

The LSP Partners are committed to improving its overall effectiveness. To this end they carried out a detailed Self-Assessment, from which three priority areas for improvement were identified at the LSP's Board meeting in May 2009 for action in 2009/10. These are to achieve the following:

- 6.5 The LSP communicates clearly and effectively with the public, organisations and sectors about the SCS, its Vision and Strategic Priorities.
- 3.8 The SCS strategic priorities and actions are designed to clearly bring added value in that they are over and above the work of individual partners.
- 4.2 The LSP has identified and agreed the resources for the delivery of the SCS. This includes joint commissioning of services between partners and the creation of pooled or aligned budgets where appropriate.

The Action Plan for these priorities is monitored by the LSP's Working Group, which meets bi-monthly.

## **2.2. Equality Impact Assessment**

The LSP has produced an Equality Impact Assessment and Action Plan for its own operations that will be considered by the South Somerset Corporate Equality Steering Group on 6<sup>th</sup> October 2009. The LSP's Working Group will monitor this Action Plan. In addition, an Equality Risk Assessment methodology has been developed to enable Partners to measure the impact on equality of activities to deliver the Sustainable Community Strategy.

## **2.3. Managing Performance and Risk**

In 2008, the LSP formed a new sub-committee to manage performance and risk. The LSP's Performance Monitoring Sub-Committee closely monitors the agreed activities under the Sustainable Community Strategy and any pump priming or pooled budgets, being delivered by Partners. A new Risk Management system has been developed which should facilitate a clearer understanding of the potential impact of failure in one specific action, on the Strategy and the LSP as a whole. The Performance Monitoring Sub-Committee meets bi-monthly.

## **3. Delivering the South Somerset Sustainable Community Strategy**

The LSP does not replicate or replace the function and activities of its member partner organisations. On the contrary, the aim is to add value to what is already happening in the district either by identifying a gap and commissioning work to address this or by working in innovative ways together to address particularly resistant issues.

It is a statutory requirement for the district to produce a Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) that draws together the trends, issues and needs across all areas of life into one comprehensive document. This Strategy was completed in 2008, was adopted by South Somerset Together on 26<sup>th</sup> September 2008 and by SSDC's Full Council on 30<sup>th</sup> October 2008, and is available on the South Somerset Together website (<http://www.southsomersettogether.org.uk>) for downloading, including a text only version. A four-page summary of the Strategy was included in the Spring 2009 edition of South Somerset News, delivered to every household in the district.

To deliver against the 35 Strategic Priorities and 50 Actions of the Strategy has required:

- The development of 31 Delivery Plans with links to the Somerset LAA Implementation Plans;
- LSP Partners to make an explicit commitment to supporting the delivery of the Strategy;
- SSDC has included all of the Actions in its Our Targets Insert 2009/10 of the revised Corporate Plan;
- The delivery of 7 pump-priming projects all of which will be completed by the end of 2009;
- The approval of a range of priority activities to be addressed in 2009/10.

This is a significant achievement in so short a time, especially since it involves a number of Partners to work together with limited resources.

### **Financial implications**

There are no financial implications in accepting this report.

### **Appendices:**

Appendix One: Financial Report 2008-2009

Appendix Two: Investment Plan 2009/10

Appendix Three: Zero-Som Event Full Report

Appendix Four: LSP Programmes 2009

### **Background papers:**

1: Shaping South Somerset – a Strategy for Sustainable Communities (2008-2026), Full version.

2: SST Constitution and Terms of Reference ([www.southsomersettogether.org.uk](http://www.southsomersettogether.org.uk)).