

THE STRATEGIC FORUM FOR CENTRAL WALES AND THE WEST MIDLANDS

HOPE COMMUNITY CHURCH CONFERENCE CENTRE, NEWTOWN
THURSDAY 2ND APRIL 2009

- Panel and Presenters gathered for coffee in VIP Lounge at 10am. Meeting with Chair, Rev'd Nick Read, OBE and introductions to other speakers. Welsh Minister, Alun Fred Jones, Cllrs David Smith and Roger Phillips, Jo Newton and Claire Fildes. Opportunity taken for photographs outside.
- More than 110 high level representatives from organisations on either side of the border were present. The Regional Assembly was well represented at the highest level: Board Members present were Cllrs. Steve Eling, Sarindar Singh Sahota (WMBC), Elizabeth Newman and Roger Stone (WMBC). Staff members present included Mark Middleton, Danny Lamb, Tim Williams, Hafsa Fitzwilliam and Sara Roberts
- Press coverage: Approved by WMRA and WAG, being managed by Judie Kellie PR. Photographs by WMRA

PROGRAMME

REGISTRATION & REFRESHMENTS **10.00**

PART ONE - PROGRESS TO DATE

WELCOME & INTRODUCTION **10.30**

Chair: Rev. Nick Read, OBE

- Background, review and look ahead – where we have come from; what we have achieved so far; now with the restructuring of the governance arrangements for the West Midlands and the emerging Delivery Framework for the Central Wales Spatial Plan we are on the cusp of something new.

PRESENTATION: CROSS BORDER HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE SUB-GROUP **10.45**

Jo Newton, Chairman, Herefordshire PCT

- Illustration of how the MoU is being implemented in practice – Jo Newton chairs the Cross Border Health & Social Care Group. She will be giving an insight into the work to date and the challenges facing the commissioners and the communities
- The Welsh Affairs Select Committee published The Provision of Cross Border Health Services for Wales [HC56] on Friday 27 March

MINISTERIAL ADDRESS & INTRODUCTIONS **11.05**

followed by PANEL DISCUSSION

Alun Ffred Jones AM, Minister for Heritage, Welsh Assembly Government

Cllr David Smith: Chairman, West Midlands Regional Assembly

Cllr Roger Phillips: Chair, West Midlands Local Authority Leaders Board

- Welsh Minister welcome address. New in post he gave a brief introduction to himself and his aspirations for closer cross-border collaboration.
- Opportunity for brief introductions: Cllr David Smith, followed by Cllr Roger Phillips
- Questions: Better deal for the border communities; opportunities for better alignment in terms of spatial planning; better cohesion built into SIRS; notwithstanding general election – ensuring that we have the mechanisms and the impetus to improve; resolving challenges, e.g. renewables, health, transport
- Sign Off:
 - Cllr David Smith – Original signatory to MoU; urging WMRA Officers and key partners to progress the agenda; maintaining a keen interest in the ongoing work; congratulating everyone on progress to date
 - Cllr Roger Phillips – Leading on the restructuring of the region; mindful that the successor arrangements of the MoU need to be determined and the region makes a strong commitment to take forward. Calling on Westminster, Cardiff and GOWM to work more closely.
 - Welsh Minister – On behalf of the Welsh Assembly Government, giving his commitment to pursue/support the MoU – to have the understanding and put hard and fast agreements in place in order to help

REFRESHMENTS

11.50

PART TWO - LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

PRESENTATION: OFFA'S DYKE COUNTRY REGENERATION STRATEGY

12.00

Clare Fildes, Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership

- This project, jointly funded by Natural England, AWM and Welsh Assembly Government, is a further tangible illustration of collaborative working. Initiated in January of this year, it will report in June and aims to build on existing initiatives, identifying new opportunities to build sustainable rural communities in the border areas. These will link the high quality natural assets to community and economic regeneration. Resources for Change have been engaged to work on behalf of the Offa's Dyke Partnership and will work with stakeholders to identify potential opportunities and develop the findings into a practical delivery plan which adds value to existing initiatives.

WORKSHOPS: OPPORTUNITIES FOR WORKING TOGETHER

12.20

Resources for Change

- Six facilitated workshops:
 - Community Facilities & Public Services
 - Transport
 - Recreation & Tourism
 - Land Management
 - Business & the Rural Economy
 - Cross Border Strategic Opportunities

CLOSING REMARKS

13.10

Chair: Rev. Nick Read, OBE

- Not a plenary session for the workshops. This is just re-gathering of everyone back into the main hall. Opportunity for Chair to sum up and thank everyone for their contributions

LUNCH & OPPORTUNITY FOR NETWORKING

13.20

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