

Herefordshire Partnership Chief Executives Group

Meeting date: 2nd February 2007
Report filed by: Richard Quallington (VSA rep)

The Partnership Chief Executives Group met for the second time at the beginning of February. Its role is focused on leading and managing the operational functions of the Partnership including the **Community Strategy and the Local Area Agreement (LAA)**.

The meeting received updates on the **performance of the LAA** including recommendations for unspent elements of the funding for the current year. Next year it is likely that £2-3 million will be channelled through the Herefordshire LAA 'single pot' to address the priorities agreed by partners and Government Office for the West Midlands (GOWM). Progress with the LAA, which had recently been through a process of 'refresh,' was good and had been classed as **good in all categories** - one of only 2 others in the west midlands region. Despite this achievement it was recognised that there was still more to do in relation to the engagement of the VCS in the shaping and the delivery of the LAA. It was also reported that, although the longer term objective was to obtain greater flexibility within and between the pooled funding streams, it had been agreed to retain the existing spending profiles for 07/08 in order to ensure continuity and delivery for existing activity.

Magda Prail, Chair of the **Herefordshire Infrastructure Consortium (HIC)** gave a brief update on the work of the consortium in coordinating and improving front line support services to voluntary organisations and community groups locally. The Consortium, through mechanisms such as **the VSA**, also had an important role in 'Advocacy', in helping to strengthen and support the 'voices' of the sector in contributing to the development of strategy and policy. It also had a part to play in helping to develop strong leadership for the sector locally in Herefordshire. The role that the consortium has to play in aiding communication and clarifying roles and responsibilities within the sector was also welcomed.

Effective partnership working is complex and demands a sophisticated set of organisational relationships and behaviours. To help cultivate and develop **more effective partnership working** in Herefordshire the Partnership is working with '**Common Purpose**' to deliver a locally tailored programme focussing on the delivery of Herefordshire's Community Strategy. The 6 day programme will involve people in leadership positions recruited from all three sectors - public, private and voluntary with bursaries available for organisations with small training budgets. For those interested in participating in, or wanting to know more about the programme further details are available from **Philippa Lydford** at

Herefordshire Partnership on 01432 261788 or email her at plydford@herefordshire.gov.uk

Some important changes are also in the offing for the way that public services are to be delivered in Herefordshire. The planned introduction of the **Public Service Trust** will see a coming together of functions currently undertaken by the **Council and the Primary Care Trust** under a new Public Service Trust umbrella. This will have an important impact on the way that the public sector relates to and works with voluntary organisations locally in future. The partnership is keen to include other sector representatives including the VCS in some of the working groups that will be taking the work forward at the next stage. The current aim is to have the new trust up and running by March 2008.

Other items discussed at the meeting included:-

- **Herefordshire Connects** - a major change management programme in Herefordshire Council to reengineer how it delivers services in the future.
- **Accommodation and Herefordshire Council** – The Council is currently reviewing its future accommodation needs and is considering collaboration with other organisations in order to maximise the service/customer focus.
- A brief update on **Consultations and policy development** was provided including the West Midlands Economic Strategy, South Wye forward strategy, the Regional Capacity Building programme, the COMPACT and EU funding opportunities.
- The role of **Chair of the Chief Executives Group** moves around partners on a regular basis. Neil Pringle stood down as Chair. Sharon Gray was nominated as Chair and Mark Turner as Vice-Chair. Both were elected unanimously.

The Chief Executives Group will meet next on the 30th March