

ONE Haverhill Workshop Notes: 17th September 2015

Present: Cllr Alaric Pugh, Jason Andre, Cllr Pat Hanlon, Cllr Betty Mclatchy, Cllr Tony Brown, Insp Peter Ferrie, Ian Gallin, Clair Harvey, Colin Poole, Lizzi Cocker, Cllr Tim Marks, John Mayhew, Warren Smyth, Alex Till, Lois Wreathall, Nick Stevens, Sarah Howard
Apologies: Henry Wilson, Jon Eaton, Lyn Davies, Philip Sullivan, Cllr Sarah Stamp, David Ruddy

These preliminary notes are provided to enable partners to feedback and share with their partner organisations and bring back a mandate to a Full Board to be held later in the autumn.

Workshop Aims:

- To feedback to OH partners on the stakeholder engagement following workshop 1
- To finalise recommendations to the Board on the issue of the 'form' of One Haverhill Partnership going forward
- To move forward recommendations on Terms of Reference issues that have arisen during the course of this work
- To make recommendations on the work schedule for the Partnership and suggest action 'themes'

Workshop summary:

The workshop began with a recap of the community resilience exercise the Partnership had undertaken at the last workshop.

The feedback on the Stakeholder Engagement was then presented and discussed.

The feedback fell into the following core areas:

1. The Role of the One Haverhill Partnership

- Partnership working - informing the decisions of public bodies that work in Haverhill
- Helping understand what people of Haverhill want/need, who is best placed to deliver, how can we maximise the benefits?
- Analysis has shown that One Haverhill has added value and the value to the community is immeasurable but was agreed
- Using its brand and the partnership membership to leverage additional resources
- Its strength is its breadth and ability to influence (but this relies on communications)

ONE Haverhill is valued by the partners and seen as a body that acts to use or influence the use of public money. By sharing information, discussing joint priorities and understanding the bigger picture, public and other bodies are able to work together where it makes sense for them to do so or make strategically informed internal decisions on spend and services with cognisance of the views of the partnership. There's a strong sense that ONE Haverhill adds value to the areas of work it gets involved in whether it is the work undertaken on apprenticeships or the Masterplan. Its brand is a key part of its identity and above all else this has helped it leverage in external resources and build a national profile for Haverhill and for its form of partnership working.

2. Resources

- Money is tighter than ever but partners appeared to be committed to being involved in delivering jointly
- Partners would need to see where outcomes frameworks cross over if we were going to commit resources to further joint working
- Businesses will need support as a group to get an injection of funding into the town
- No-one can state what resources we'd be willing to pool/provide until we are clear about the scale and reach of the priorities identified (planning needed)

It is very clear from our conversations with partners that partners are prepared to commit resources to projects of ONE Haverhill only when they are focused on agreed outcomes across the partnership and projects are based on evidence. There's also a sense that any projects ONE Haverhill undertakes should be owned and managed by a group of committed partner organisations or possibly by a single partner leading others.

3. Communications, Support, Secretariat

- OH as OH has had bad press and we need to demystify it albeit this has been limited to social media
- OH has also had excellent press coverage from both local papers on an on-going basis especially where partnership working has been apparent
- A suggestion is that partners could take it in turn to do communications for ONE Haverhill
- The debate on 'Why do we need dedicated communications' was resolved by consensus but not unanimity?
- Some partners are prepared to 'fund' or provide the core communications function required by a partnership
- If the action programme becomes more 'meaty' it will need even dedicated support/coordination
- There is a rationale for having own communications if there are activities being delivered

- The chair in the current role needs more support - perhaps 1 to 2 days fte mix of comms and admin.

Branding and communications are seen as important to ONE Haverhill's success. Although some suggest that the success of the ONE Haverhill brand has potentially raised questions in the minds of some residents as to who is ONE Haverhill and what is the Partnership. It was suggested that partner branding should be reflected on the website and on key documents. Some queried whether a dedicated communications function is needed and whether organisational communications functions couldn't undertake this on behalf of ONE Haverhill. It was pointed out that the dedicated 1 day per month of communications support had now finished and that the Chair was now undertaking this role as much as she could. There was much discussion over this issue and the conclusion was a better understanding of how much is involved in delivering professional quality communications. Organisations agreed that finding £4,200 per year to continue the basic communications work should be possible from within partner resources.

4. Incorporation or Partnership

- There is little (if any) appetite to centrally pool resources for core functions (coordination, administration, communications) though some appetite to pool resources for work in key themes
- From a function point of view therefore, there is no reason currently to incorporate ONE Haverhill
- There is much support for ONE Haverhill to continue working as a partnership and evidence of added value
- There is a huge appetite to change/improve how the partnership is working

The workshop agreed with the recommendation not to incorporate and to 'draw a line' under the potential for incorporation or ONE Haverhill becoming a legal entity itself. However the importance of ONE Haverhill's identity, website, and having someone who could speak on its behalf is important. It is also felt that ONE Haverhill can either help access funding working with partners or access some funds individual partners are not able to access. It was strongly felt that the ONE Haverhill brand had helped with the master planning consultation. Interestingly, it was also felt that there is a great deal more capacity within the community and not enough understanding as to how ONE Haverhill could tap into that. One participant suggested ONE Haverhill be re-launched as the ONE Haverhill Partnership externally although clearly it has always been a partnership.

Following a break, the workshop then considered some of the changes proposed to how the Partnership currently operates that arose through the stakeholder engagement work. It was suggested that this not being a formal meeting of ONE Haverhill, the workshop should provide a steer or make recommendations but that any rewrites of the Terms of Reference subsequently would need to be ratified by ONE Haverhill at a formal meeting.

5. Proposed Changes to How we Work - Composition

- Are the right people around the table? Suggestions include increase business representation and elected member representation?

It was suggested that representation could be increased in the following areas:

- someone from public health
- a further town Councillor
- someone from the Fire Service

It was felt that public health should be there as at the moment the CCG effectively represents services that address 'ill health' whereas public health has a prevention agenda. It was felt that a further Town Councillor on the partnership would help create more links and ownership between the Town Council and ONE Haverhill. The Fire Service was suggested as they are also now exploring how their resources can be used more widely. As this discussion continued, there was a suggestion that representation would never be perfect however trust and the skills and behaviours people bring were important. It was later suggested that Public Health and Fire Service are part of the County Council and that perhaps they should be brought on board for specific projects only. This was not resolved and the suggestion needs further decision or discussion and perhaps a recommendation to come forward from the consultant based on best practice.

6. Voting

- Remove voting from the provisions of the Terms of Reference. Why? It is hardly used. It creates a framework for decision making where there are no 'decisions'. It potentially serves to confuse members and the public about the role of ONE Haverhill vis a vis the role of partner organisations.

It was acknowledged by the workshop that there are few decisions involving funds that don't go back to partner organisations for formal governance and sign off, that voting is rarely used, and that most of ONE Haverhill's work happens by consensus. However, there are still times, particularly over how ONE Haverhill operates where decisions are needed and a vote is taken. It is likely that any terms of reference need to be changed to reflect these two different approaches to working. It was felt by several representatives that they needed to go back to their organisations to discuss this. So it remained unresolved at the workshop itself.

7. Arrangements for Support

- We need to write in to the Terms of Reference provisions for provision of support for secretariat, communications and the chair - this could move around the partners on an annual basis
- We need to write in the function of the Executive Core Group

It was agreed that these support areas need writing into the Terms of Reference and the roles of partners in that. It was also agreed that the operation of the Executive Core Group should also be written in. This currently consists of the Chair, Vice Chair and the 3 officers from Haverhill Town, St Edmundsbury Borough and Suffolk County Councils.

8. Transparency

- Meetings should be held in public, agendas and minutes should be published
- It's become a make or break issue for some. A majority either agree with it or are prepared to try it for the sake of keeping everyone on board. There are still some that are against it.

This was by far the most difficult discussion of the workshop. A range of suggestions emerged including having 2 public meetings a year for the 'full partnership' that are open to the public and press whilst the current 'Board' effectively becomes a working group to conduct business outside of that though ensuring agendas and minutes are publicly available. Many points were made that can be summed up as follows:

- Most around the table have not chosen to take public office and would be moved into a situation where they will be scrutinised by the public and the press
- Concern that making the current 'board' meetings open public meetings would change the way officers and others will support and behave. They will feel less able to make commitments and more of a need to support elected members only.
- It could lead to more work and the need for more resources - meetings will need to be organised well, publicised, using venues that can accommodate the public, and generating press interest that will need responding to.
- There was also many comments in favour of public meetings, particularly from elected members and these were mostly about countering some current perceptions of ONE Haverhill and that where a body has influence over public spend in a town there should be public accountability.

A vote was taken on the issue. 6 voted in favour, 10 against (4 votes were cast in advance of the meeting).

It was agreed that following this workshop the Terms of Reference would be reviewed and there was a willingness amongst those present to consider other areas where ONE Haverhill could be even more open to public access, further partnership and public scrutiny.

9. Themes and Priorities Moving Forward

- There is wide agreement on the priority themes going forward:
 - o Maintain & develop work on apprenticeships
 - o Health as a theme going forward - health inequality, quality/availability of GP provision, mental health, local health communications and access arrangements
 - o Business improvement eg, more coordinated approach to Cambridge City Deal and cross border working
- Organisational outcome frameworks need examining to identify areas of cross over and opportunities for better joined up working

- A mini ‘NCB’ approach needs to be delivered in each of these to understand what the issues are, what we spend deliver now, what we could do different, the projected costs/benefits
- There is more of an appetite to divert funds to joined up projects in themes where evidence is used to justify a different approach

It is suggested that Delivering the Masterplan needs to become a 4th action priority, although what role what organisations have in this will have to be determined by the local planning and economic development authority once the Masterplan has become a Supplementary Planning Document.

Lastly, Ian Gallin has offered to ask a county/borough data group he is involved in to support the development of the action ‘themes’ with specific data.

The core group is tasked with going away to formulate a more detailed plan for these work areas going forward - looking at resources, delivery partners, structures and timescales. This will be brought to the OHP Board but may in itself have an impact on the organisation structure decisions that are required.

A.O.B

Importantly, CH wanted to bring to the board’s attention a pilot project testing local variation in delivering highways/public realm type services that aim to enhance local areas and enable communities to do more for themselves. More information will be provided on this shortly.

SCC, SEBC, Havebury and HTC are all working together to enhance the existing community ambassadors scheme, a desire to employ a parish handyman for Haverhill and understand how we can all work together to make Haverhill an exemplar, where communities take a real interest in making their environment the best it can be. More details will follow as the pilot project develops.