



Swindon
Strategic
Partnership

Swindon Strategic Partnership Conference Report October 2009



Sharing future success in a changing Swindon

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Monday 12th October 2009 saw the second Conference of the year dedicated to the partners and stakeholders of the Swindon Strategic Partnership. The conference was held in the historic Great Western Hall at the STEAM museum in Swindon.

This conference saw over 210 delegates attend, of which over a half were from Community groups, parish councils, resident groups and local businesses. The conference itself covered current and emerging issues for Swindon being: Destination Swindon; Equalities; an update on Connecting People Connecting Places and a Question Time panel.

This brief report is not intended to minute the Conference but is meant to provide a summary of the day and an aide memoir of the work done together.

Destination Swindon

Gavin Jones, Chief Executive of Swindon Borough Council gave a presentation to the group on the concept of Destination Swindon – One plan for Swindon. This will focus on service delivery over the next 4 years by SBC and its partners. This is an opportunity for public service providers in Swindon to align and optimise resources against agreed priorities, to increasingly shift focus from the “corporate centre” to localities and to follow on the work already started within Connecting People, Connecting Places.

Gavin added that in the light of squeezed budgets and increasing demand, it is has never been more important to have clarity and alignment in terms of priorities and objectives for all of the organisations engaged in delivering outcomes for the people of Swindon.

Equalities

Anjali Arya, our Keynote speaker on Equality & Diversity, has a national presence in the field of equality and diversity - especially in work with public authorities and their partnerships - she is one of the authors of the Equality Framework for Local Government - a national benchmarking system in which increasing partnership responses is a key theme. Anjali's approach is pragmatic and realistic. She has worked with a number of partnerships to help identify and prioritise work to ensure equality issues are embedded with their processes.

Anjali ran an interactive session to help the SSP understand the reasons for embedding equality work, encouraging us to share an understanding of what this means, understand some of the tools and processes we can use, and then develop how we all can practically take this issue forward.

The session raised participants' awareness about equalities issues and identified what this means for the work of the Partnership. It also helped delegates to understand the concept of equality impact assessments and why they are important to our work. Tasks and responsibilities were identified for taking the work forward.

Connecting People Connecting Places update

The conference received an update on the programme from Cllr Brian Mattock, Cabinet Member for Connecting People Connecting Places. Updates were received from three Cluster Leads, Bernie Brannan (West Cluster), Mark Walker (Town Centre Cluster) and Ian Bickerton (North Central Cluster). Each Cluster Lead updated the delegates of events and work being done in their Cluster since the launch in May 2009.

The conference then heard from Chief Superintendent Paul Howlett, Wiltshire Police around Neighbourhood Policing Teams and the how the four Neighbourhood Policing Sectors are working with the Cluster areas to support Connecting People Connecting Places. Paul also talked about “Total Place” which is a new initiative that looks at how a ‘whole area’ approach to public services can lead to better services at less cost. It seeks to identify and avoid overlap and duplication between organisations – delivering a step change in both service improvement and efficiency at the local level.

Paul then detailed three areas of Swindon that are the current priorities: Tree Courts, Pinehurst – reducing anti-social behaviour; West Swindon Restorative Justice Pilot; Broadgreen, street sex trade.

Question Time

At this conference it was suggested that we should have a “Question Time” style panel to answer any burning issues our delegates might have. We’d asked our delegates prior to the conference to e-mail in their questions to enable us to get the right balance of people on the panel. Thank you to all who took the time to participate in this session. We managed to answer around half of the questions sent to us, but answers to all of the questions will be available on the Swindon Strategic Partnership website towards the end of November 2009.

The Swindon Strategic Partnership would like to thank all the delegates who set aside the time to attend and participate on the day and for the invaluable feedback you provided. Your feedback is very important as it helps us to plan for the next conference, this has helped the Conferences grow from strength to strength and make them a success. I look forward to continuing our work together.

Tom Charnock

Tom Charnock
Chair of Swindon Strategic Partnership Overview and Monitoring Group
October 2009