

CCEN discussion paper: A shared vision for the LSP

Context

The October LSP meeting included papers on changes and developments regarding Camden's strategic partnerships. The main points from the meeting, and from government press releases and developments since then, are:

The Local Strategic Partnership (LSP)

- A smaller more efficient LSP with stronger connections to the thematic partnerships.
- Organiser of events to address important issues in the borough, and serviced by time-limited working groups to address gaps and cross-cutting issues.

The thematic partnerships

- A new Sustainability Partnership. CEN / VCS members have already been approached to participate.
- A reconfigured economic development partnership with a stronger business focus – the Camden Business Partnership.
- New responsibilities that will impact on the Health and Well-being Board. This will change to become 'fit for purpose'.
- Director of Children, Schools and Families told the LSP that changes were expected. Since then the Dept. for Education has announced a new approach for Children's Trust Boards. Freedoms and flexibilities – removing legislation like requirements to produce a plan, rules on how to run a trust, and obligation to even have a trust board. Although there is still an expectation in favour of partnership working.
- Community Safety – the other partnership, which Peter may be able to update on??

The changes above will have implications for the voluntary and community sector – engaging at decision making level and quality (and equality) of partnership arrangements at strategic and service delivery levels. The points raised by CEN members at the meeting focussed on knowledge held by the LSP, the need for cross sector overview and communication at high level, and threat to partnership / coherence through breaking up LSP business into working groups. These points were also reflected in comments from some of the private and public sector LSP members. In January the LSP will discuss 'a shared vision' for the future.

Challenge and opportunity?

The changing environment presents a challenge to the CEN - how do we maintain (or even better, strengthen) VCS representation and voice at a strategic level? We have an opportunity to present a VCS vision for the future at the January LSP meeting. Some questions to consider for discussion are:

- What does the LSP do for the VCS?
- What does the VCS contribute to the LSP and other strategic partnerships?
- What do we want from the LSP in the future?

Below is a quick SWOT analysis of the VCS in relation to the LSP and new policy environment. How can we use these (and anything else you want to add) to shape a vision?

Strengths	Weaknesses
Accountability, transparency, collective voice, inclusion, reach, networks, communication, diversity, knowledge, cross-cutting, overview, connect policy and reality, flexibility, responsiveness, adaptability, sustainability, volunteerism, multi-tasking, transferable skills, social outcomes	Vulnerability, material assets, funding, positional power, organisational capacity
Opportunities	Threats
Shaping new agenda? Changing positional power? Big Society shaper and enabler? Filling bigger gaps? New public sector ally?	Perceptions, politics, policies, contract culture, spending review, undermining of VCS values, corporate power, competition