



**LAP ACTION PLAN PROTOCOL
HOW WEST DORSET PARTNERSHIP MEMBERS WILL ENGAGE IN AND RESPOND
TO LAP ACTION PLANS**

July 2006

The West Dorset Partnership believes that the work of the Local Area Partnerships (LAPs) one of the key building blocks of community planning. The West Dorset Partnership (WDP) and its individual partner organisations welcome the concept of the Local Area Partnerships and will offer advice, help and information in forming their Action Plan.

LOCAL AREA PARTNERSHIP ACTION PLAN PRODUCTION

In order to maximise the benefits and impact of the Local Area Partnership action plans (or other community-based work which will influence either partner organisations' policies or the allocation of resources), the West Dorset Partnership will encourage the preparation of Local Area Partnership action plans which are based on the West Dorset District Council Policy on Local Area Partnerships and generally adhere to the following principles:

(1) Inclusive community engagement

The process must actively involve the public throughout, with well-publicised opportunities for ideas to be fed in at the start, regular communication and feedback during the work as well as an opportunity for comment on the draft proposals, and evidence that these ideas and comments have been carefully considered. The plan should be generally supported by the local community, demonstrated through evidence of consensus being achieved in the consultation process, and endorsed at an open and inclusive meeting of the steering group.

(2) Robust understanding of the issues

Sufficient research work should be carried out to justify the plan's conclusions. Evidence should be provided, on request, of any community activities and consultation and analysis related to the conclusions, including the consideration of alternative options for addressing issues of concern.

(3) Involvement of the West Dorset Partnership members

Local Area Partnerships should involve and consult the West Dorset Partnership members from the very start and throughout the action plan development process. It is particularly important that those service providers who may be asked to take action or give support are contacted to discuss how identified local problems can be addressed prior to drafting the plan. When a draft plan is produced for public consultation, the Local Area Partnerships will be encouraged to submit it to the West Dorset Partnership, as a forum to consult with service providers. The Community Planning Officer will aim to circulate the draft plan to all West Dorset Partnership members within 10 working

days. This will enable those members that have not been involved in its preparation to date to determine whether or not they should be involved in discussions with the Local Area Partnerships. Local Area Partnerships will have the opportunity to present their action plan to a meeting of the West Dorset Partnership where possible.

LOCAL AREA PARTNERSHIPS ACTION PLAN ASSESSMENT

Once finalised, the Local Area Partnership action plan should be submitted to the West Dorset Partnership for a formal response. The West Dorset Partnership will aim to respond to the requests for action contained within the plan within 3 months of its receipt.

The Community Planning Officer will acknowledge receipt of the Plan within 10 working days and circulate copies of the plan to the individual West Dorset Partnership members. Members will provide a written response to relevant actions to the Community Planning Officer within 6 weeks, coordinating efforts / views with other service providers where appropriate.

Responses should indicate the extent to which the respective organisation will either:

- IMPLEMENT the specific action, subject to financial, procedural or legal constraints – where further information is required prior to this decision being made this should be clarified;
- FUND the specific action through direct budgets or grant funding (e.g. eligible for grant funding if applied for)
- SUPPORT the specific action, where action cannot be directly implemented by the organisation – e.g. by working in partnership with other organisations; or by endorsement for external / internal funding bids;
- UNABLE TO SUPPORT the specific action, making clear why this decision has been made, e.g. the project is against local / national policies or cannot be funded within current budgets.

In determining the extent to which current resources should be focused on the plan actions, it will be appropriate for West Dorset Partnership members to consider the following points:

- The scope for proposals to be implemented within the resources and work programmes of partner organisations (e.g. through the planning system, refuse collection, community health etc).
- The scope for proposals to be implemented in partnership with other organisations, especially other West Dorset Partnership member – e.g. joint target setting and joint working.
- The degree of 'fit' between the proposed action and the current objectives and strategies of the West Dorset Partnership and its constituent organisations where these remain reasonably up-to-date.

The Community Planning Officer will draft a comprehensive response based on the feedback, and circulate to the West Dorset Partnership. West Dorset Partnership members will be asked to check responses, particularly looking for possible opportunities for joint working and send comments to the Community Planning Officer. The final response will be agreed by the West Dorset Partnership Chairman, prior to dispatch. The formal response will be sent to the Local Area Partnership and will be presented to the next available meeting of the West Dorset Partnership for information.

The Community Planning Officer will maintain a database of issues and actions identified in the action plans, and the related West Dorset Partnership responses (this will include parish plans actions). Members will be invited to identify and discuss areas of common concern where these begin to emerge, for example where actions do not fit within current resources the West Dorset Partnership may lobby for the implementation of these actions.

WHAT IS REQUIRED OF INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS

All West Dorset Partnership members will nominate a contact person/s from within their organisation (this will normally be the parish plan contacts) who will:

- Answer direct enquiries from the Local Area Partnership in respect of service provision issues during the drafting of the plan (or act as the main point of contact for their organisation to respond to these requests)
- Circulate the Local Area Partnership action plans round their organisation for comments as set out in this protocol
- Respond with a combined organisation response to the plans directly to the Community Planning Officer, within 6 weeks of the receipt of the action plan, to enable the production of a joint West Dorset Partnership response
- Raise opportunities for joint working between West Dorset Partnership partners, where possible
- Ensure that services take into account Local Area Partnership Action Plans when planning future service delivery.

West Dorset District Council will be responsible for the employment of the Community Planning Officer who will:

- Circulate the Local Area Partnership plans within 10 working days of receipt
- Produce a combined response to be circulated to the West Dorset Partnership and then formally to the Local Area Partnership
- Maintain the West Dorset Partnership website advisory pages (for so long as it is hosted by the council)
- Maintain a database of Local Area Partnership / parish plan issues and actions.

Local Area Partnerships will:

- Be responsible for continuing to update the West Dorset Partnership at its regular meetings on the progress being made.