

VALUE FOR MONEY

PARTNERSHIP WORKING

Background

The difficult financial climate and forecasts of considerable cuts to the public sector has meant that the Authority wishes to take a lead in developing partnership arrangements in Sussex, to ensure the very best use of the collective public sector resources through enhanced collaboration with our key partners in the County.

The Authority adding value

The Authority annually holds a conference with the leaders and chief executives from local authorities across Sussex. The conference also includes invitations to representatives from the Sussex Association of Local Councils and West Sussex and East Sussex Fire and Rescue Services.

Due to the concerns relating to the financial situation, the Authority decided to theme the November 2009 conference around one particular issue. The conference was named "Maintaining public confidence in a challenging financial environment: a shared challenge for the public sector in Sussex" and was focused on how the public sector together could make best use of their resources to best impact the delivery of services to the public of Sussex.

The conference was chaired by the Chairman of the Authority and the Vice-Chairman of the Authority, our Lead Member for Resources, Mr Steve Waight. The conference included presentations from the Chief Fire Officer from East Sussex and Chief Executives from other councils across the County.

Outcome

The conference was a catalyst for change. As one delegate said, "this is the first time that all of us have got together. We were all in the same position and need to work together better".

As a direct result of the conference, closer collaborative working is under way.

- The Chairman and Chief Officers of the Authority are planning a full round of meetings with council leaders and chief executives from across the county on a one-to-one basis.
- Each of the councils have identified lead officers to work with Sussex Police Authority and the Force to develop opportunities to work together better.
- A meeting was held on 4 March 2010, following up from pledges made at the conference in November 2009. It was sighted throughout the meeting, that the decisions made there to work closer together on areas such as fleet maintenance and asset collaboration, would not have

happened had the Authority not brought this to everybody's agenda together at the conference in November, where senior political and executive commitment was publicly made.

The Authority have also appointed a Lead Member for Partnership Working, Mr Peter Evans.

The Authority is determined to continue to be a leader in Sussex and facilitator for change, to bring together partners across the County to deliver improved services to the public with less funding.

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