

**LEICESTERSHIRE TOGETHER (LOCAL STRATEGIC
PARTNERSHIP) BOARD**

Tuesday 21st February 2006

**“LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS: SHAPING THEIR
FUTURE” - LEICESTERSHIRE TOGETHER RESPONSE**

REPORT OF LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Purpose of Report

1. To provide the Board with an opportunity to comment on the draft joint Leicestershire Together and District LSP response to the “Local Strategic Partnerships: Shaping Their Future” Consultation Paper produced by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

Background

2. The Consultation Paper was launched by the ODPM in December 2005. The deadline for responses to the paper is March 3rd 2006.
3. In their Foreword to the paper, David Miliband and Phil Woolas highlight the increasing role of partnerships in delivering services (local authorities working with other public sector agencies, businesses and the voluntary and community sectors), and describe Local Strategic Partnerships as “*the vehicle for this way of working*”. The paper also flags up the opportunity for LSPs to play a role in better quality neighbourhood engagement and their vital role in agreeing and delivering Local Area Agreements.
4. The Government’s vision of the role, accountability and governance of LSPs, set out in the paper, is as follows:

“We want LSPs

1. *To be the partnership of partnerships in an area, providing the strategic co-ordination within the area and linking with other plans and bodies established at the regional, sub-regional and local level*
2. *To ensure a Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) is produced that sets the vision and priorities for the area, agreed by all parties, including local citizens and businesses and built on a solid evidence base*
3. *To develop and drive the effective delivery of Local Area Agreements*
4. *To agree an Action Plan for achieving the SCS priorities, including the LAA outcomes*

*In two tier areas, we expect **County-level LSPs** to agree the LAA and relevant Action Plan, taking into account priorities identified by District local authorities and LSPs in their Sustainable Community Strategies.*

District-level LSPs to be fully considered and involved in the drawing up and implementing of the county-wide SCS and LAA. Relevant LAA outcomes should also be reflected in the District LSPs Action Plans and future iterations of District-led plans, including Local Development Frameworks.

5. The key ambitions for the future development of LSPs, which underpin the consultation, are as follows:
 - an evolved role for local authorities in facilitating action through LSPs and Sustainable Community Strategies (SCSs)
 - LSPs able to effectively deliver against priorities for joint actions through the SCS, LAA and Local Development Frameworks (LDFs)
 - LSPs better able to support neighbourhood engagement and ensure the views of neighbourhoods and Parish Councils can influence local service delivery and spending
 - Effective, transparent and accountable governance and scrutiny arrangements for LSPs to enable partners to hold each other to account and local people to hold the LSP to account.

6. The paper is divided into 4 key chapters, at the end of each chapter is a series of key questions, which are intended to help Government to understand “how LSPs are operating at present and where changes could be made nationally, regionally and locally to help them to develop most effectively”. The chapters cover:
 - The role of LSPs and Sustainable Community Strategies
 - Governance
 - Accountability
 - Capacity Issues

7. Some of the new/key themes explored within the paper include:
 - The concept of a Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) which reflects various policy developments (including LAAs, LDFs and the Government’s new Sustainable Development Strategy)
 - The role of LSPs in developing the vision for the area through a SCS, and the delivery contract through the LAA
 - The proposal for a “duty to co-operate” in the preparation of a SCS
 - The links between theme or service-based plans and SCSs
 - The relationship between regional/sub-regional and local organisations and LSPs
 - The role of local councillors, MPs and representatives of local communities
 - LSPs role in ensuring the neighbourhood voice is heard and where the responsibility for neighbourhood engagement should lie
 - The links between spatial planning (LDFs) and community planning (the new SCSs)
 - Delineation of roles between county and district LSPs
 - The relationship between thematic partnerships and LSPs and partnership rationalisation

8. At the last meeting of the Board in December, it was agreed that a joint response should be produced on behalf of Leicestershire Together and District LSPs for consideration at this meeting.

9. The first draft of the joint response is attached to this report. Contributions to this response have come from Blaby, Hinckley & Bosworth and Melton and Leicestershire Councils/LSPs.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Board considers the draft response to the “Local Strategic Partnerships: Shaping Their Future” paper and agree any changes to be incorporated prior to submission of its response at the beginning of March 2006

Officer to Contact:

Nicole Rickard

0116 265 6977

nrickard@leics.gov.uk