

LEICESTERSHIRE TOGETHER PEER CHALLENGE **- 30TH/31ST MARCH**

Self Assessment

Vision and Strategy

Background

- Leicestershire Together (20 year) Vision agreed following first Annual Conference in June
- Consultation to inform Community Strategy, Community Strategy Review and Local Area Agreement through Citizens Panel, Juries, Focus Groups etc.
- Community Strategy produced in July 03 and Review document in 05
- Community Cohesion Action Plan produced, with initial focus on young people
- Citizens Juries held for young people, people with disabilities and BME community
- Wide range of presentations to Board at quarterly meetings e.g. public health priorities, LSEP activities, National Policing Plan, Climate Change Strategy, Local Transport Plan, Valuing People, Parenting Strategy, Regional Plan Review etc

Strengths

The Partnership's vision and priorities have been developed as a result of extensive consultation with all relevant stakeholders and local communities (communities of place and communities of interest) in particular, those who face disadvantage and discrimination.

Weaknesses

The LSP's priorities are reflected in partner's plans and strategies and partner organisations understand their contribution to delivering the LSP's aims and objectives and are working towards a Local Area agreement (LAA).

Opportunities

Could develop the Community Strategy into a high level statement of strengths and weaknesses in Leicestershire.

Use the LAA to clarify understanding amongst agencies and local community about LT aims and objectives in the short, medium and long term.

Leadership

Background

- LSP chaired by Leader of County Council and supported by Assistant Chief Executive and LCC staff
- Performance Management and Community Strategy prioritisation events provided good opportunity for Board to bond
- Key issue seems to be communication and "championing" within own organisations
- Appointed Board Champions for some of the LT key projects - but this is not working effectively
- Good discussion at December Board Meeting about the need to submit partnership response to Options for Change consultation (housing figures)
- LT has led the LAA on behalf of the county – challenge in a two tier structure
- Success in getting people on Board for key projects e.g. Funding Toolkit, Citizens Juries
- We could encourage more debate at meetings by varying the format and chairing style

Strengths

The LSP provides a setting for leadership decisions.

Weaknesses

The leadership style actively encourages and values collaboration and participation between all partners; and is able to appropriately reflect different situations.

Opportunities

The LAA provides an opportunity to focus on what we are trying to achieve as a partnership

Governance and Management

Background

- There are no theme groups but we work through established theme partnerships e.g. Leicestershire Rural Partnership, ENABLE, Leicester Shire Economic Partnership, Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership for Leicestershire
- Also set up time limited Sub Groups to consider specific issues e.g. membership, Community Strategy
- LT has supported Juries for people from BME communities and with Disabilities
- We aim to establish a Multi-Faith partnership in 2006/07
- Attendance generally good at LT Board Meetings BUT not always a wide range of input
- For a non-NRF LSP, reasonable resources have been committed to support LSP by County Council BUT we need more to deliver effectively
- Summary of key action points sent out following each Board meeting and a rolling log of issues to follow up has been established
- Most things done on behalf of LT are done by the County Council

Strengths

Representation on the various LSP bodies is effective. In particular: it is appropriate to the issues to be addressed attendance at meetings is consistent without a high level of substitution, those attending meetings have the authority to speak for, commit resources and exert influence in, their respective organisations, those attending have the relevant skills and expertise to participate in partnership working.

Weaknesses

The LSP demonstrates full involvement from those groups that are traditionally under represented such as faith groups, black and minority ethnic groups, young people etc.

Opportunities

To establish an independent Leicestershire Together.

As more money is pooled through the LAA we will be able to use it to do things differently

Relationships

Background

- The lack of funding for the LSP has led to a perception of dominance by LCC, as this is where resources currently come from
- LAA has provided a new focus for the LSP and a reason to agree shared priorities
- Consultation Toolkit established BUT variable usage by partners
- Funding Toolkit currently being developed to increase amount of external funding to Leicestershire
- Strategy for Community Information and Data Sharing Protocols in place
- Good relationship with the Voluntary Sector (briefings held prior to each Board meeting), big gap is the relationship with the community sector
- The Citizens Juries have helped us to forge relationships with local people and service provider organisations
- We have a formal relationship with District LSPs in that they are all represented on the LT Board

Strengths

The LSP has developed relevant protocols and other agreements for ensuring good cross agency working and involving local people (e.g. protocols on information sharing etc).

Weaknesses

Arrangements are in place to facilitate good communication between: individuals and organisations involved in the LSP, the various sub groups that make up the LSP (e.g. Board, sub-partnerships and the wider membership of the LSP), other relevant partnerships and organisations, between other tiers of local government and across boundaries.

LSP partner organisations can demonstrate joint processes for consulting and communicating with local people as individuals, communities of interest and in geographical communities/ neighbourhoods; and for receiving feedback.

Opportunities

Neighbourhood working focus offers an opportunity to build stronger, more effective relationships with both partners and local communities

Community Cohesion is likely to be a focus for LT in 2006/07 and offers a real opportunity to do things differently

Performance Management

Background

- Little need for complex performance management systems to date, due to lack of funding but progress against key projects is reported to the Board by the lead organisation
- A Database is in place to allow us to monitor progress against each CS action
- Reports on all CS priority actions to quarterly LT Board meetings
- Aim to introduce use of TEN to manage LAA and CS
- TEN is used by most of the Districts so should be able to align systems
- Performance Management Action Plan produced following partnership self assessment by LT in 2004
- Partnership Self Assessment Toolkit developed for use by all partnerships in the county and made available on LT website. Support for partnerships during the process is provided by LCC staff

Strengths

The LSP has systems and processes in place to keep track of progress in achieving its objectives and evaluate outcomes

Weaknesses

LSP partners have aligned their performance management arrangements to meet the LSP business planning cycle.

Opportunities

There will be a role for LT in performance management on behalf of the locality – the LAA will provide a focus for this

Achievements and Impact

Background

- Key joint working arrangements have been set up around access to services
 - Better Access to Better Services Initiative (BABS) and joint branding of customer access points such as Service Shops/Help Points
- Mapping of partnerships in the county undertaken in 2004
- Practical initiatives:
 - *Citizens Juries – BME, Disabilities, Young People, Rural*
 - *Youth Champion Grants pilot in Hinckley and Bosworth*
 - *The Jitty - youth website by young people, for young people*
 - *Leicester Shire On Line Research Atlas (LSORA)*
 - *Audit of Community Development Workers*
 - *Audit of Community Buildings*
 - *Joint Service Shops - Connect branding*
 - *Community Cohesion Youth Drama project*
 - *LT used to establish Funders Panel*
- BUT do local people recognise these achievements?
- LT leading development of LAA, which is based on county and district Community Strategy priorities and output from the Conference
- LT website used as intranet for the development of the LAA
- Conference to launch the LAA (June 2005) attracted 180 delegates
- Change Picture Bank now on intranet to help LCC staff to make information accessible, will be rolled out to partners. Direct output from Jury.

Strengths

The LSP helps to co-ordinate activities, avoid duplication and encourage joint working by partners. New joint working arrangements are emerging from LSP activities.

Weaknesses

Achievements are recognised and valued by local people and making a difference on the ground.

Opportunities

With LSP paper, LAA, neighbourhood working etc. it is a good time to look at new ways of working.

Use the website more effectively – development are planned such as the introduction of e-mail news alerts.

Learning and Development

Background

- Performance Management Action Plan produced following Partnership Assessment
- LT website used to share information on key projects
- Few joint training activities undertaken as a partnership
- Good track record of using mechanisms such as Citizens Panel and Parish Plans to establish needs of local people
- Lots of information about the needs of local people – could we use this better as a partnership?
- Focus on avoiding duplication - e.g. LSORA re information, Audit of Community Facilities
- Passed on good practice to other areas - LSORA, Citizens Juries etc.

Strengths

The LSP is open to new ways of doing things and is willing to experiment and to be creative and innovative in pursuing its objectives, actively learning from good practice and drawing on outside expertise where relevant.

Weaknesses

Learning is disseminated within and between those organisations participating in the LSP and to other partnership bodies and this learning affects delivery in mainstream service provision.

The LSP has produced an Improvement Plan for the on-going development of its activities.

Opportunities

Build on the culture that is developing of sharing information.

To interpret the information and knowledge that we have more effectively and use it to determine priorities