

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

**Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2006**

**THE FUTURE OF LEICESTER SHIRE ONLINE RESEARCH ATLAS (LSORA)**

**REPORT OF LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**Purpose of Report**

1. The purpose of the report is to seek the Board's approval to develop the Leicester Shire Online Research Atlas (LSORA) web portal as the Local Information System and to merge it with the Leicester Shire Intelligence (LSI) web site.

**Previous Decisions**

2. At its meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2003, the Leicestershire Together Board endorsed a decision to (a) support the need to improve the quality of and access to community and economic information in Leicestershire, and (b) to the establishment of a joint project team to work up a more detailed proposal for a Leicester and Leicestershire Community and Economic Information Portal to be reported to a future meeting.
3. At its meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2005, Mr Hunt asked that consideration be given to link LSORA with the statistical work of the Leicester Shire Intelligence website as this would be helpful and that it would be important to publicise these sites widely to businesses, the voluntary sectors, etc.

**Background**

4. In summer 2004, a Project Board with representatives from Leicestershire Together, Leicester Partnership and Leicester Shire Economic Partnership, together with officers from County, City and two District Councils, and Leicestershire Police was set up with a view to providing the strategic direction for the LSORA web portal project (formerly known as Leicester and Leicestershire Community and Economic Information Portal). The LSORA Project Board has been supported by a joint project team involving officers from agencies based in the County and City.
5. Progress on the development of the LSORA Project has been reported regularly to Leicestershire Together Board as part of the Work Programme Updates. However, it is worth mentioning that the site has now over 500 datasets at different geographical levels, many of these datasets are locally derived. Even though the site has not been 'launched' or promoted widely, it has over 800 registered users. Appendix A1 and A2 shows a list of current users and type of datasets currently accessed by these users. It is planned to carry out a 'soft' launch of the web portal during the summer and detailed marketing plan is currently being developed which will be presented to the LSORA Project Board at its next meeting.
6. The LSORA Project has received national recognition, including a presentation to the over 20 people from the Prime Ministers Delivery Unit, The Treasury, the Office for

National Statistics and the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit. The Project has also been one of five national case studies used by the then ODPM Neighbourhood Renewal Unit as part of its survey of Local Information Systems.

7. Leicestershire Together Board members are asked to visit the web portal ([www.lsora.org](http://www.lsora.org)) to see some of the recent developments that are available to users. (If you are a new user then self service registration will provide you with a password and give access to the Data and Maps part of the web portal).
8. Parallel to the LSORA, the Leicester Shire Intelligence (LSI) website was developed by Leicester Shire Economic Partnership (LSEP) to provide economic and labour market research and information. LSI website's unique selling point has been to publish economic research and analysis to the public as opposed to detailed community information. It also lacks the capability to provide statistical datasets and mapping facilities which are available on LSORA.

### **Developing a Local Intelligence System (LIS)**

9. A Local Intelligence System (LIS) provides mostly quantitative information about an area, with the aim of assisting planners and policy makers, community leaders and Elected Members, commercial organisations, the general public and students to view and potentially analyse data. Users can include senior managers making strategic decisions and members of the general public wishing to find out more information about the community in which they live.
10. The key feature of a LIS is that it is accessed via a standard web browser from the Internet or Intranet. A LIS will always include statistical data such as demographics and usually area profiles (key indicators and statistics such as employment, education, crime levels and health information). It may also contain research papers, performance indicators and consultation or survey results. A key feature of every LIS should be an index to what is available.
11. Whilst LSORA and LSI websites both have many of the characteristics of a LIS listed above, they are not yet a fully functioning single LIS. For example, neither LSORA nor LSI website contain performance indicators or results from local consultation. Also both sites are independent and at present users have to go to separate websites for their research and information needs. Therefore, further development is required to rationalise and transform the two sites to create a single LIS. The benefits of having a single shared source of accurate, reliable, relevant and comprehensive data for the Leicestershire and Leicester are enormous.
12. At its meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> June 2006, the LSORA Project Board received a report of the Management Group outlining the proposal to develop a Local Intelligence System (LIS) – see appendix B.
13. As a first step towards a LIS, the Project Board agreed to establish a single 'holding page' where both LSORA and LSI customers are directed but using the current website address – [www.lsora.org](http://www.lsora.org) & [www.lsint.info](http://www.lsint.info)). From this the users can then go to either LSORA or LSI websites.
14. The Project Board also agreed that a small 'task and finish group' be set up to look at recasting the LSORA project work plan for 2006/7, which is more aligned to meet the

information needs of the Local Area Agreements (LAAs) for Leicestershire and Leicester. This information would provide the supporting contextual and indicator data for the LAAs.

15. In the longer term, the proposal for the merged LSI/LSORA website and transform it towards a LIS will require the support of all local strategic partnerships and local agencies and partners. Progress will be reported to the Leicestershire Together Board as part the regular work programme update.

## **Recommendations**

**It is recommended that the Board supports the merger of LSORA and LSI to create a single Local Intelligence System for Leicestershire.**

### Officer to Contact

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