

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

Monday 19th November 2007

**UPDATE ON SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY (SCS),
SECOND LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT (LAA) AND SUB REGIONAL
ARRANGEMENTS/POTENTIAL MULTI-AREA AGREEMENT**

REPORT OF LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

i) THE LEICESTERSHIRE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY

1. At previous meetings of the Board in March and May, Board members considered and approved presentations/reports on the process and timetable for developing a new Community Strategy for Leicestershire. The focus of the first hour of the September meeting was on identifying initial priorities for inclusion in the first draft of the Sustainable Community Strategy.
2. A first officer draft of the Leicestershire Community Strategy was published for a public consultation period of 10 weeks on 12th November 2007. A copy of the Strategy is attached as Appendix 1.
3. The Strategy focuses on the outcomes that we want to collectively achieve in Leicestershire by 2013 – the “what”. Our second Local Area Agreement, to be finalised by June 2008, will be the main delivery plan for the SCS – the “how”.
4. The Strategy is based around a set of outcomes for people, themes and places, developed by the lead theme or cross-cutting partnership for each issue. The draft outcomes take into account the evidence in the “This is Leicestershire” and “Places in Leicestershire” reports and input from various meetings and events, including the first round of Community Forum meetings around the County and the workshop session at the September Board meeting.
5. The first part of the Strategy includes a foreword and background information about Leicestershire Together, including our mission, principles and new draft vision for 2026. It covers the previous Community Strategy, the relationship between the SCS and the new LAA, the local, sub-regional and regional context and a summary of the issues identified in the evidence bases.
6. The cross-cutting themes against which priority outcomes have been identified are vulnerable people, vulnerable places/priority neighbourhoods, access to services, rural, equalities, efficiencies, sport and culture.
7. The people and theme based areas against which priority outcomes have been identified are safer communities, stronger communities, cleaner and

greener, economic development and enterprise, housing, transport, children and young people, older people and healthier communities.

8. The final section of the Strategy includes priority outcomes for places in Leicestershire, arranged by the 27 Community Forums.
9. Paper copies of the Strategy have been sent to libraries, schools, post offices, Parish Councils and the top 100 businesses in the County. People have been asked to complete an on-line response form on the Leicestershire Together website, focusing on the draft vision, the relative importance of the priority outcomes and whether there are any outcomes missing.
10. The consultation period runs until 16th January 2008, although people are asked to respond by 21st December if at all possible in order to maximise the time to consider responses. Following the consultation period, the Strategy will be revised and re-circulated for final comments. During the consultation period, work will begin in earnest on our second Local Area Agreement (see below).

ii) THE SECOND LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT

11. The purpose of this section of the report is to update the Board on developments in relation to the new LAA framework and the implications of the Comprehensive Spending Review.

New National Indicator Set (NIS)

12. This comprises 198 indicators against which Leicestershire County Council will report annually in relation to its own operations and work with key partners (see appendix 2). This replaces Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs) and Performance Assessment Framework (PAF) indicators. The Government published the draft indicator set for consultation on November 9th.

Area Based Grant (ABG) and Commissioning

13. ABG replaces pooled funding and totals approximately £4.1 billion over three years nationally. Over 40 previously ring-fenced grants are included (although not all of these would ordinarily be received in Leicestershire). Information on those received in 2007-08 is currently being collected to give an idea of how much is involved, as decisions need to be made as soon as possible on the allocation of these funds. There is a presumption that commissioning will provide the main vehicle for organising delivery to meet LAA priorities and consideration needs to be given to the fit between existing service based commissioning arrangements and new arrangements for strategic commissioning. At its meeting on 31st October, Strategic Senior Officer Group (SSOG) approved the establishment of a small task and finish group to focus on the use of ABG and to scope out the implications of the new LAA framework for commissioning approaches.

LAA Negotiation

14. There is confirmation that apart from the 17 indicators from the Department of Children, Schools and Families there are no further mandatory targets. Therefore the negotiation with GOEM will be in relation to up to 35 targets drawn from the NIS, although the ambition locally is to have around half this number. GOEM have provided a very early cut of what they consider to be the priorities for Leicestershire and will subsequently provide the evidence to support these (see appendix 3). The draft SCS obviously sets out our initial local draft priorities for Leicestershire, and these need to be refined and further prioritised over the coming months.

Readiness for LAA Negotiation

15. The LAA Leads meeting on 9th November agreed that initial work should be undertaken to identify where data is available locally against the NIS and carry-out other technical preparatory work by the end of November. When negotiation around the indicators begins in earnest (January onwards) partners will need to provide dedicated officer time to support the development of the LAA as a performance management framework.

LAA Delivery in Places

16. To meet with Comprehensive Area Assessment requirements, the SCS and LAA will need to have geographical expression at a place level below County level. The work on the 'Places in Leicestershire' evidence base and links being made to spatial frameworks (i.e. LDF Core Strategies) will progress this in terms of the SCS. In terms of LAA delivery, more thinking is required and there are various existing arrangements that need to be considered. At the SSOG meeting on 31st October, a second cross-partnership task and finish group was convened to focus this aspect of the LAA.

Risk Assessment

17. The County Council invited the Police and PCT to provide some external challenge to its strategic risk assessment in the summer. They suggested that an area based risk assessment should be undertaken - this would be consistent with the requirements of the Comprehensive Area Assessment where understanding of risk will be a major factor. It has therefore been agreed that an area based risk assessment will be prepared by Deloitte on behalf of the Partnership and a short workshop will be held to validate the high level risk assessment that emerges.

Next Steps

18. In light of the work involved in developing the LAA, an additional SSOG meeting has been arranged for 13th December 2007. This will provide an opportunity for SSOG to play a part in the process of prioritising the outcomes from the SCS to be included in the LAA. The outcomes from this meeting will be reported on the Board at their next meeting, when Board members will be asked to approve the proposed changes to the SCS, amended following the public consultation period.
19. There will be other opportunities for Board members to be involved in the process of finalising the SCS and developing the draft LAA, including through theme partnerships, District LSPs and Community Forums (see Paper G for more information). The Board will sign off both the SCS and LAA before they are published.

(iii) SUB REGIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

20. Government has asked areas to consider agreeing multi area agreements with geographical neighbours on relevant issues. In this sub-region, cross City/County governance arrangements could range from a full 'Local Public Service Board' model covering strategy and priority setting across all service and policy issues, to a more focused approach on issues that have greatest cross City/County boundary effects.
21. The LAA fourth theme (economic development, transport, spatial, housing and environment) has the most obvious cross over between the City and County in terms of on the ground reality (e.g. business relocation, journey to work, shopping catchments, housing market areas) and organisational activity (LSEP, LPL, sub regional economic strategy being prepared, Central Leicestershire Transport Plan, NGP programme board, possible CDC, Learning Partnership, Employment and Skills Board, Chamber of Commerce, etc.). The fourth theme subject areas also have the strongest synergy with the Sub National Review and 6Cs activities.
22. The components of governance for this would include:
 - Having a common fourth theme section in each of the City and County Community Strategies.
 - Identifying the priorities and delivery arrangements for this theme through a single MAA rather than the two LAAs.
 - Establishing a single working group covering the whole sub region with relevant bodies represented (with specialist sub groups as necessary – which could include existing groups such as the Employment and Skills Board and New Growth Points Programme Board.).
 - Setting up a local authority chaired strategy group led by City and County Council Leaders, with representation from other agencies most relevant to the theme, to oversee the working group and content and delivery of the MAA.

- Involvement of emda and a channel for regional funding.
- Using these strategy and working group arrangements and the MAA to set the framework for CDC activity if this goes forward in due course.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Board:

- a) notes progress in relation to the development of the Sustainable Community Strategy and the timetable;**
- b) notes developments in relation to the national indicator sets, the task and finish groups proposed to progress LAA development, the additional meeting of SSOG (that will report on to the Board at its next meeting) and the proposed Leicestershire risk assessment; and**
- c) considers proposals for sub-regional working**

Officer to contact:

Nicole Rickard
John Wright

0116 3056977
0116 3058015

nrickard@leics.gov.uk
jpwright@leics.gov.uk