

LEICESTERSHIRE STRATEGIC SENIOR OFFICERS' GROUP
2 JULY 2007

LEICESTERSHIRE LAA 2006-07 ANNUAL REVIEW MEETING
SELF ASSESSMENT REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To enable SSOG to judge current progress in Leicestershire with regard to LAA implementation in terms of progress in 2006-07 and the current prospects for improved performance going forward (see self assessment documents 1, 2 and 3 attached).

Background

2. The annual self assessment for the first year of the Local Area Agreement builds on the first self assessment at six months. Government will not be making a traffic light assessment but GOEM will submit a report to CLG by 31 July. The current LAA was due to run until 2009 but is likely to change significantly over the next 9 months in the transition to a new national LAA framework in April 2008.

The Self Assessment

3. The attached self assessment documentation falls into three parts:
 - An overall summary document that is designed to be self contained focusing on main achievements, risks and the direction of travel.
 - A thematic section which includes a summary on achievements, risks and improvement activity by theme with the main risks in a table format.
 - A third section of the full indicator tables.

Progress against outcomes during the first year of the LAA

4. Year 1 has involved much work to bed-in partnership, delivery and performance management arrangements for this first LAA. Progress against LAA outcomes as measured by specified indicators is positive. Of those that could be measured at the time of writing 62% were on track (green) and only 13% were considered red (high risk of not achieving planned targets). Specific examples of strong performance are on page 7 of the summary document. Governance and performance management processes are operating well with the implementation of the TEN system. The number of data gaps has reduced by a third and of the remaining 30 over half are in relation to annual reporting arrangements.
5. The task of ensuring the development of appropriate improvement activity for amber or red indicators is lead by the seven theme lead officers supported by the relevant outcomes leads in theme delivery groups. Progress going forward is monitoring quarterly at a theme level and by SSOG. There has been a particular focus on reward targets from SSOG who have requested a more detailed risk assessment be carried out by the end of June.

Other Aspects of Added value

6. Alongside progress as measured by the indicators there are a number of positive developments associated with the LAA that include:
 - Stronger partnership capacity in strategic and delivery terms with new Economic, Stronger and Healthier theme partnership bodies and the instigation of Leads Plus meetings to better integrate cross-cutting issues.
 - Innovative collaboration through the shared focus on outcomes the LAA brings e.g. access to cultural services for vulnerable young people or Learn to Earn project for helping people off incapacity benefit.
 - Impetus to new policy areas e.g. neighbourhood management, social capital and community cohesion
 - A positive focus for the County Council's community leadership role
 - Improved relationships with government, particularly at the regional level.

The Transition to a New Framework

7. The positive developments mentioned above put Leicestershire in a stronger position for negotiating a new Local Agreement and delivering improved outcomes in partnership than was the case in the run up to the current agreement. Furthermore lessons can be learnt from this first year for the next LAA e.g. on technical issues such as performance indicator definition and target setting (see pages 20-22 of summary document).
8. For partners within Leicestershire Together the strengthening of the national LAA framework from 2008 with an expected larger single funding pot and its alignment with the new Comprehensive Area Assessment framework from 2009 presents significant challenges and this necessitates some assessment of the extent to which current arrangements are fit for purpose. In simple terms this falls in to consideration of two roles:
 - A The capacity of partnership arrangements both overall within the Leicestershire Together Board and in specific themes to provide the right strategic framework, expressed via the Sustainable Community Strategy.
 - B The ability of LT partners to better align strategy, delivery and performance management arrangements so that the new LAA framework leads to improved outcomes for Leicestershire residents.

Recommendations

9. It is RECOMMENDED that:-
 - (i) SSOG considers the self assessment, the prospects for successful transition to the new regime and the challenges posed to Leicestershire Together from 2008 and comments as appropriate; and
 - (ii) SSOG LAA leads ensure as appropriate that their partnerships and organisations are supporting improvement activity for high risk targets particularly where they lead on or have a significant stake in outcomes.

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