

# Overview and Scrutiny Task Group - Local Strategic Partnership

Agenda and Reports  
For consideration on

**Wednesday, 1st October  
2008**

In Committee Room 1, Town Hall, Chorley  
At 6.00 pm



### **PROCEDURE FOR PUBLIC QUESTIONS/SPEAKING AT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MEETINGS**

- Questions must be submitted to the Democratic Services Section by no later than midday, two working days before the day of the meeting to allow time to prepare appropriate responses and investigate issues if necessary.
- A maximum period of 3 minutes will be allowed for a question from a member of the public on an item on the agenda. A maximum period of 30 minutes to be allocated for public questions if necessary at each meeting. This will provide an opportunity for members of the public to raise and ask questions on any issue falling within the remit of the Group.

24 September 2008

Dear Councillor

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY TASK GROUP - LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP - WEDNESDAY, 1ST OCTOBER 2008**

You are invited to attend a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Task Group - Local Strategic Partnership to be held in Committee Room 1, Town Hall, Chorley on Wednesday, 1st October 2008 commencing at 6.00 pm.

**AGENDA**

1. **Apologies for absence**

2. **Declarations of Any Interests**

Members are reminded of their responsibility to declare any personal interest in respect of matters contained in this agenda. If the interest arises **only** as result of your membership of another public body or one to which you have been appointed by the Council then you only need to declare it if you intend to speak.

If the personal interest is a prejudicial interest, you must withdraw from the meeting. Normally you should leave the room before the business starts to be discussed. You do, however, have the same right to speak as a member of the public and may remain in the room to enable you to exercise that right and then leave immediately. In either case you must not seek to improperly influence a decision on the matter.

3. **Principles of the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP)**

The Assistant Chief Executive (Policy and Performance) will give a brief presentation on the background to Local Strategic Partnerships and the formation of Chorley Partnership.

The presentation will introduce the following documents.

a) **The Constitution of Chorley Partnership** (Pages 1 - 12)

Chorley Partnership Constitution (enclosed)

b) **Representation on the Chorley Partnership** (Pages 13 - 14)

A list of organisations that are represented on Chorley Partnership (enclosed)

c) **Government guidance on Local Strategic Partnerships (LSP's)** (Pages 15 - 16)

Executive Summary (enclosed)

- d) The Annual Report for 2007/08 of Chorley Partnership (Pages 17 - 48)  
Annual Performance Report 2007/08 (enclosed)
- e) IDeA Guidance on the effective scrutiny of Local Strategic Partnerships (Pages 49 - 84)  
IDeA Guidance document (enclosed)
- f) The Peer Review of Chorley Partnership (Pages 85 - 100)  
Peer Review (enclosed)

4. **The Scoping of the Scrutiny Review of Chorley Partnership. (Pages 101 - 102)**

Scoping document (enclosed)

5. **Public Questions**

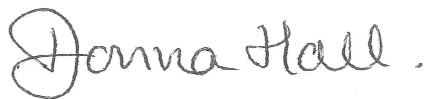
Members of the public who have requested the opportunity to ask a question(s) on an item(s) on the agenda will be asked to put their question(s) to the Panel. Each member of the public will be allowed to ask one supplementary question within his/her allocated 3 minutes.

6. **Suggested dates for future meetings**

- Tuesday 21 October 2008 at 6.30pm
- Tuesday 25 November 2008 at 6.30pm
- Tuesday 16 December 2008 at 6.30pm

7. **Any other item(s) that the Chair decides is/are urgent**

Yours sincerely



Donna Hall  
Chief Executive

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**Distribution**

1. Agenda and reports to all Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Task Group - Local Strategic Partnership (Councillor Mike Devaney (Chair) and Councillors Dennis Edgerley, Alan Cain, Hasina Khan, Nora Ball and Marie Gray for attendance.

2. Agenda and reports to Lesley-Ann Fenton (Assistant Chief Executive (Policy and Performance)), Claire Thompson (Performance Advisor (Partnership)), Carol Russell (Head of Democratic Services) and Dianne Scambler (Trainee Democratic Services Officer) for attendance.

**This information can be made available to you in larger print or on audio tape, or translated into your own language. Please telephone 01257 515118 to access this service.**

આ માહિતીનો અનુવાદ આપની પોતાની ભાષામાં કરી શકાય છે. આ સેવા સરળતાથી મેળવવા માટે કૃપા કરી, આ નંબર પર ફોન કરો: 01257 515822

ان معلومات کا ترجمہ آپکی اپنی زبان میں بھی کیا جاسکتا ہے۔ یہ خدمت استعمال کرنے کیلئے براہ مہربانی اس نمبر پر ٹیلیفون

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# Chorley Partnership Constitution 2008







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# Why does the Chorley Partnership exist?

## Purpose

The Chorley Partnership is the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) for Chorley. In the Local Government White Paper, LSPs are tasked as the main vehicle for developing a vision for transforming a place and for tackling hard cross-cutting social problems, and for producing and delivering the Sustainable Community Strategy.

LSPs are not statutory bodies, however they do have a very important role in bringing together the public, private, voluntary and community sectors to co-ordinate joint working and expertise in improving localities.



## The role of the LSP

The Key roles of the Local Strategic Partnership are:

- 1 To oversee the production of Chorley's Sustainable Community Strategy, delivered through an Action Plan that is owned and agreed by all Partners
- 2 To oversee the delivery and performance management of Chorley's contribution to the Lancashire Local Area Agreement
- 3 To draw on the expertise of the public, private, voluntary and community sectors to co-ordinate joint working and expertise in improving Chorley.
- 4 To encourage the improvement and joint-working of public services throughout Chorley to bring about efficiencies and improved services for the people of Chorley
- 5 To monitor the overall progress of the Chorley Partnership and be publicly accountable to the wider community.

# Who is involved with the Chorley Partnership

An overarching Board of 40 representatives from:

- 10 Borough/County Councillors (6 District / 4 County)
- 10 Business Sector representatives
- 10 Representatives from other public sector organisations
- 10 Representatives from the Faith, Community and Voluntary Sectors.

An Executive steering group made up of:

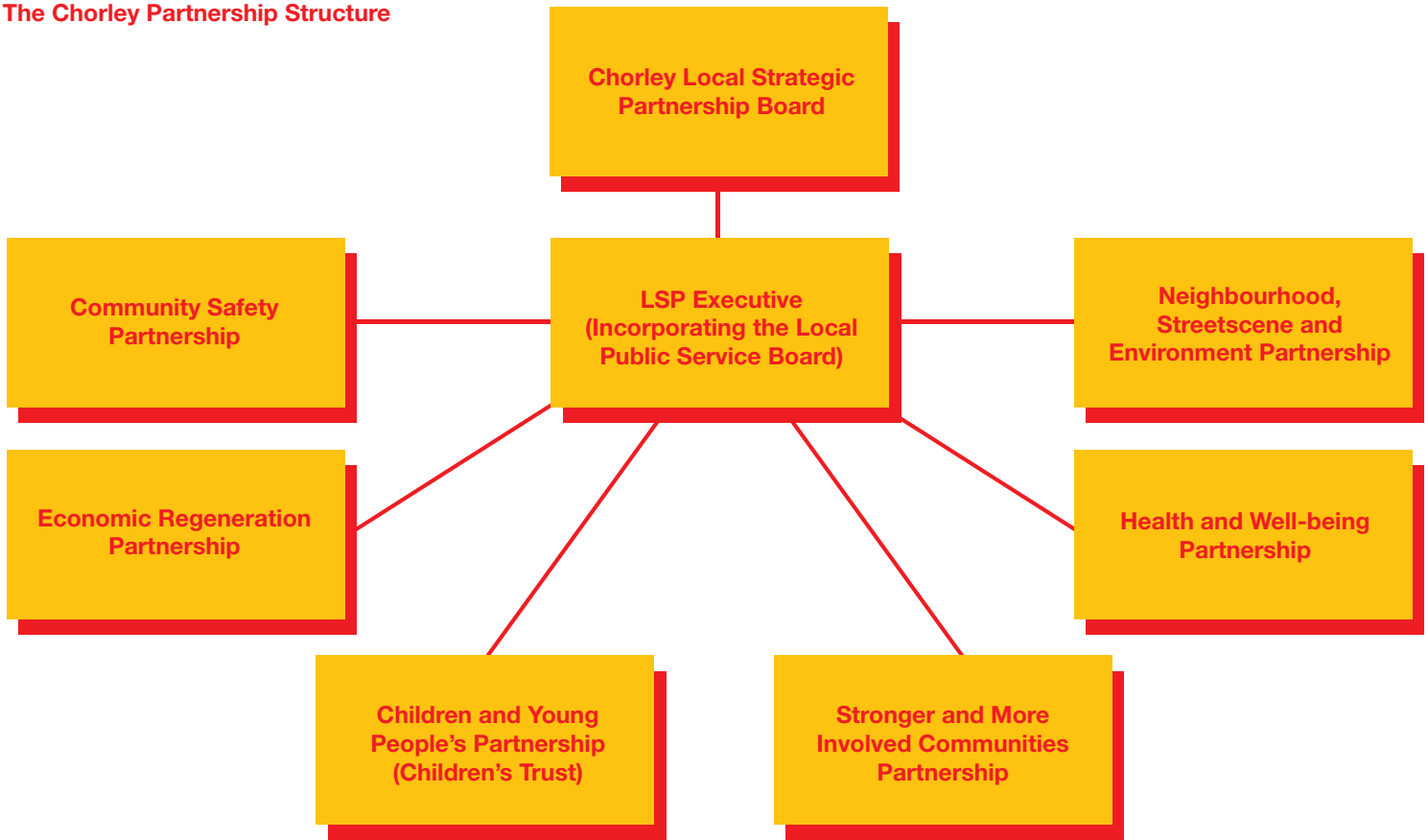
- The 6 chairs of the thematic groups
- Chief Officers from Chorley's major public sector partners:
  - o *Chief Executive, Chorley Council*
  - o *Chief officer for Chorley, Lancashire County Council*
  - o *Chief Executive, Central Lancashire PCT*
  - o *Chief Superintendent, Lancashire Police, Southern Division*
  - o *Director of Facilities & Services, Lancashire Teaching Hospitals*
  - o *Community Protection Manager, Lancashire Fire and Rescue Services*
  - o *Partnership Executive, JobCentre Plus*
  - o *Vice Principal, Runshaw College*

- A representative of the Chorley Branch of the Lancashire Association of Town and Parish Councils
- A representative from the South Ribble Partnership
- District Partnership Officer, Lancashire County Council
- Assistant Chief Executive (Policy and Performance), Chorley Council
- Performance Advisor (Partnership), Chorley Council

6 Sub-Groups, which focus in more detail on delivering the specific themes of the Sustainable Community Strategy (hence they are known as thematic partnerships)

- **Community Safety**
- **Stronger and More Involved Communities**
- **Children & Young People**
- **Economic Regeneration**
- **Health & Wellbeing**
- **Neighbourhood, Environment & Streetscene**

The Chorley Partnership Structure



# How is the Chorley Partnership structured?

**The board**

The Board is the overarching management panel of the LSP. It meets four times a year in venues across the Borough. Representatives will speak for the organisation or network that they represent at meetings and carry back to their organisations the key messages and decisions of the LSP.

The board acts as the centre of a communication network that ensures that key issues for the Borough are raised and discussed at the LSP. Its primary role is to articulate the needs and aspirations of local people and to ensure that the Chorley Partnership is addressing these.

It also scrutinises performance management information on an annual basis on the progress towards the targets in the Sustainable Community Strategy through the Annual Report, produced after the end of each financial year, as well as Chorley's contribution to the Local Area Agreement.

The Chairperson of the Board will be appointed through an election involving all Board members every two years.

The terms of reference for the Board are:

- To monitor Chorley's progress against the Local Area Agreement targets
- To scrutinise performance of the sustainable community strategy throughout the year, in particular at the end of the financial year through the Annual Report
- To act as the main opportunity for partners to meet and share information to inform future Partnership activity
- To raise topical, relevant issues that affect the Chorley Partnership's remit, as appropriate

### **The executive**

This group brings together the key decision makers in the borough, enabling them to take on a leadership and governing role. The Executive gives steer to the sub-groups to develop action plans and partnership-based projects to deliver improved local services.

This group ensures that the Sustainable Community Strategy is being delivered at an operational level – checking that

milestones and targets are being met and that project plans are on track. It monitors performance indicator information as it becomes available, particularly against the Local Area Agreement targets for Chorley.

The terms of reference for the Executive are:

- To be the accountable body for Chorley Partnership's work to achieve the Sustainable Community Strategy
- To drive the delivery of the Community Strategy at operational level ensuring milestones, targets and projects plans are being delivered.
- To co-ordinate the work of the sub-groups and ensure effective communications across the Chorley Partnership at every level.
- To develop specific initiatives which will benefit the Chorley Partnership and facilitate the delivery of the Sustainable Community Strategy priorities.
- Identify and rationalise current local partnership structures to maximise the potential for using existing arrangements into one single focus for joined up public service delivery
- Develop joint procurement opportunities and encourage efficiency savings through joint asset management and work force management
- To bring together the key decision-makers in the Borough in a way that is visible, meaningful, and accountable to local people and which delivers improved public services.

The Chair of the Executive will be the Borough Council leader.

# The thematic partnerships

There are 6 thematic partnerships that sit below the Executive group, that are tasked with delivering projects to meet the Sustainable Community Strategy objectives.

- To develop action plans which will ensure that progress can be demonstrated against Sustainable Community Strategy targets year on year
- To consult with a wider range of individuals and organisations linked to their sub-groups to ensure the action plan responds to the needs and wishes of local people
- To reshape policies, practice and structures to enable innovative joint working across organisational boundaries
- To develop excellent new models of service delivery to progress Community Strategy priorities
- To map and keep a track of all the organisations that feed into the remit of the sub group
- To be responsible for the delivery of projects to deliver the Sustainable Community Strategy

# Performance management

The Chorley Partnership has a performance management framework that allows for the regular monitoring of its performance.

In particular, this includes the monitoring of:

- LAA targets the Chorley contributes to the delivery of Sustainable Community Strategy targets
- The Chorley Partnership's cross-cutting projects

Information on performance against these targets will be reported on a quarterly or annual basis, depending on the nature of the target, by the Performance Advisor (Partnership). This data will be collected on the Council's performance management information system and used to monitor and report on the Chorley Partnership's performance.

Quarterly reports will be presented to Chorley Council's Executive Cabinet on the progress of the Chorley Partnership in the delivery of its projects, for further scrutiny.

An Annual Report will be published at the end of the financial year and presented to the June Board, as well as published on the Chorley Partnership website, detailing the performance of the Chorley Partnership over the whole year.

# Operating Arrangements

## 1. Agenda setting

### **The board**

Each Board Member is entitled to send items for a Board meeting agenda to the Performance Advisor (Partnership) for possible inclusion. This must be done at least 7 working days prior to the meeting.

The agenda will ultimately be agreed by the Chair of the Chorley Partnership.

Each Board Member will receive copies of the agenda and accompanying papers not less than 5 working days prior to the meeting.

Other items may be tabled at the meeting for information purposes.

### **The executive**

The agenda will be compiled by the Performance Advisor (Partnership) and be approved by the Chair of the Executive. Items for the agenda will be sought from each member of the Executive before the meeting.

Each Executive Member will receive copies of the agenda and accompanying papers not less than 5 working days prior to the meeting.

Other items may be tabled at the meeting for information purposes.

### **2. Decision making**

The partnership will seek to make decisions by consensus whenever appropriate. In the event of any disagreement it will be for the Chair to seek to resolve any differences. If disagreement cannot be resolved then a vote can be taken.

Voting will be needed in the case of decisions that commit finance and beyond that only in exceptional circumstances. When voting does need to take place there will be an equality of votes amongst those members present and

voting on that question. In the case of a tied vote, the Chair of the partnership will have a second or casting vote.

### **3. Declaration of Interests**

In the spirit of openness, Any member having a pecuniary interest (direct or indirect) within the meaning of the National Code of Local Government Conduct (non financial) or Sections 94 – 98 Local Government Act 1072 (financial) must disclose the fact orally.

Those declaring an interest may be asked to leave the room and/or take no part in the discussions around the particular item. However, the Chair of the meeting can, if appropriate, invite the interested party to provide factual information before the discussion begins.

### **4. Records of meetings**

A full record of those present at the meeting, of apologies of absence and non-attendance shall be recorded in the minutes. The minutes of every meeting of the Board and sub-groups of the LSP shall be drawn up and approved by the Chairs of the meetings.

### **5. Attendance**

Should any member miss 2 consecutive meetings the Board will consider whether that member should be asked for a written explanation. Unless there are exceptional reasons, missing 3 Board meetings will be considered as resignation from the Board.

# Code of Conduct

The members of the Chorley Partnership agree to abide by the following general codes of conduct when attending meetings or other business of the Chorley Partnership:

## Selflessness

1. Members should serve only the public interest and should never improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person.

## Honesty and Integrity

2. Members should not place themselves in situations where their honesty and integrity may be questioned, should not behave improperly and should on all occasions avoid the appearance of such behaviour.

## Objectivity

3. Members should make decisions on merit, including when making appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards or benefits.

## Accountability

4. Members should be accountable to the public for their actions and the manner in which they carry out their responsibilities, and should co-operate fully and honestly with any scrutiny appropriate to their particular office.

## Openness

5. Members should be as open as possible about their actions and those of their authority, and should be prepared to give reasons for those actions.

## Personal Judgement

6. Members may take account of the views of others, including their political groups, but should reach their own conclusions on the issues before them and act in accordance with those conclusions.

## Respect for Others

7. Members should promote equality by not discriminating unlawfully against any person, and by treating people with respect, regardless of their race, age, religion, gender, sexual orientation or disability. They should respect the impartiality and integrity of the authority's statutory officers, and its other employees.

## Duty to Uphold the Law

8. Members should uphold the law and, on all occasions, act in accordance with the trust that the public is entitled to place in them.

## Stewardship

9. Members should do whatever they are able to do to ensure that their authorities use their resources prudently and in accordance with the law.

## Leadership

10. Members should promote and support these principles by leadership, and by example, and should act in a way that secures or preserves public confidence.

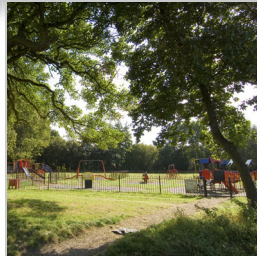




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Organisations represented on the Chorley Partnership

Age Concern Lancashire

Chorley Borough Council

Chorley Chamber of Trade

Chorley Churches Together

Chorley Community Housing

Chorley Forum of Faiths

Chorley Older Peoples Forum

Chorley Pensioners Association

Chorley Sports Forum

Chorley and South Ribble Council for Voluntary Service (CVS)

Chorley and South Ribble Disability Forum

Citizen's Advice Bureau

Clayton Brook Together

Debt Free Direct

Groundwork Lancashire West and Wigan

Helio Slough

Homestart

Job Centre Plus

Lancashire Association of Local Councils (LALC)

Lancashire College

Lancashire Constabulary

Lancashire County Council

Lancashire Drug and Alcohol Action Team

Lancashire Economic Partnership

Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service

Lancashire Learning and Skills Council

NHS Central Lancashire

North and Western Lancashire Chamber of Trade

Older People's Pensioners Association

Positive Action in Chorley East (PAiCE)

Porter Lancastrian

Rotary Club of Chorley Astley

Runshaw College

Ruttle Plant Hire

South Lancs Arts Partnership (SLAP)

South Ribble Council

South West Chorley Community Safety Group (SWITCH)

Stagecoach in Lancashire

Tatton Community Association

Telent Communications

Tenon Plc

University of Central Lancashire (UCLAN)

Villages in Partnership

## **Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) Statutory Guidance 'Creating Strong, Safe and Prosperous Communities' (2008)**

### **Executive Summary**

#### **Background**

Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) have published statutory guidance on how the Local Government and Public Health Act (2007) is to be implemented by Local Strategic Partnerships (LSP), with specific regards to the new Local Area Agreements (LAA), the new Duty to Involve, and sustainable community strategies.

Whilst most of this guidance is applicable to upper-tier Local Strategic Partnership's (LSP) only, this executive summary identifies the relevant points of the new statutory guidance for the Chorley Partnership.

#### **How the guidance affects District Local Strategic Partnerships**

The majority of the guidance specifically relates to upper tier Local Strategic Partnership's (LSP). However the guidance sets out the following for **all** Local Strategic Partnership's (LSP).

- Local Strategic Partnership's are not statutory bodies and are not the final decision makers on plans – this responsibility ultimately rests with the Council.
- However, it is a statutory duty of a district council to prepare a Sustainable Community Strategy.
- Roles of the Local Strategic Partnership:
  - Local Strategic Partnership's (LSP) have a Leadership and Governing role through identifying the needs and aspirations of local communities or arbitrating between competing interests
  - Local Strategic Partnership's (LSP) should have an oversight of and co-ordinate community consultation going on in the borough – and where appropriate combine them
  - Produce a sustainable community strategy based on data and evidence from local population
  - Have oversight on the alignment and planning of resources where relevant to delivery of Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) (although each partner will remain individually accountable for its decisions taken in relation to its own funding streams)
  - Review and manage progress of the Local Area Agreement (LAA) at a local level
- Councils are expected to initiate and maintain momentum in the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) and ensure appropriate representation across the sectors, as well as the involvement of local residents where appropriate.

**Role of elected members in the Local Strategic Partnership**

- New powers of scrutiny to O&S committees will mean that **for Local Area Agreement (LAA) purposes**, Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) can scrutinise of the actions of partner authorities in the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) (with the exception of police authorities and the chief officer of police).
- There must be embedded democratic accountability within the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) structure
- The Chair of the Board must be agreed by the Local Authority's Executive

**New Guidance on Sustainable Community Strategies**

- Typically 10-20 years, the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) should contribute to the sustainable development of the UK
- Sustainable Community Strategies must be consulted on widely in light of the new Duty to Involve principles
- Once prepared, the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) must be agreed at Full Council.

**Local Development Frameworks**

- Planning authorities are required to have regard to the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) for that area, in two tiers areas, both district and county. The Local Development Framework (LDF) should be aligned as far as possible with the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) for that area.
- Consultation for both the Local Development Framework (LDF) and Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) should be taken in conjunction wherever possible.



# Annual Performance Report

## 2007 - 2008

This report outlines the Chorley Partnership's performance throughout 2007/8

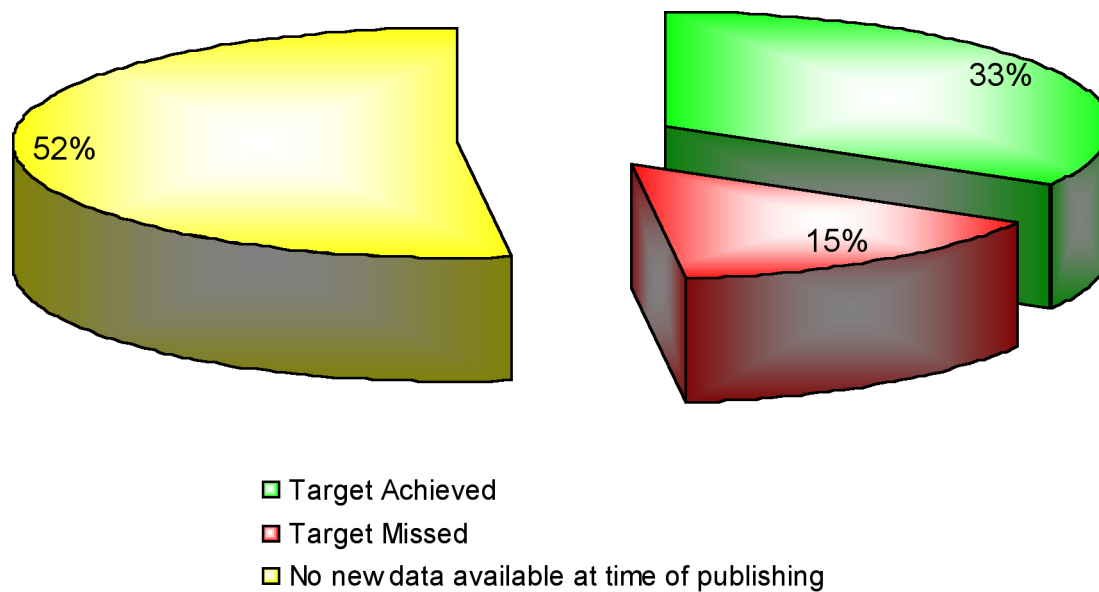
## Key facts

- Crime is down by 14.4% on last year, and by 26% since 2003/4
- Chorley's relative place in the Indices of Multiple Deprivation has improved, from 172nd to 188th out of the 354 local authorities in the country
- Life expectancy for women, at 80.8 years, is higher than the north west average of 80.3, as is the men's figure of 76.7 years, compared to 75.8 years – but both are still lower than the national average
- Teenage pregnancy fell in one year by 10%
- Unemployment rose slightly in Chorley, from 1.6 in 2006/7, to 1.7 in 2007/8. Although Chorley's position is still well below the UK average of 2.2%
- Pockets of inequality still exist, particularly in our eight areas of deprivation where:
  - BME residents make up 6.64% of the population, as opposed to only 3.6% in more affluent areas
  - Residents with limiting lifelong illness make up 24.9% of the population, compared with 18.5% in more affluent areas
- Average house prices in Chorley, are fourth highest out of all of Lancashire, making access to affordable housing difficult for local people
- In terms of health, Chorley has the second highest rate in all of Lancashire for alcohol-related harm



## Performance Indicators

The Indicators of Success in the Sustainable Community Strategy have been monitored and compared with last year's statistics. Unfortunately, a lot of quality of life indicators are only collected every two or three years and as such it is not possible to monitor these this year – but we hope to update on these next year.



Out of the targets we can report on, four missed target. They were:

- > Reduction in teenage pregnancy rate per 1000 under 18 year olds (Target 40.4, Actual 40.3)
- > Increase in number of affordable houses built (Target 250 by March '09, Actual 68 as at March '08)
- > Increase in percent of people satisfied with:
  - > Theatres (Target 53%, Actual 23.6%)
  - > Parks & Open Spaces (Target 76%, Actual 74.3%)

# Projects

Five out of Six of the Chorley Partnership's projects from 2008/9 have been delivered or are ongoing into 2008/9. The remaining project, First Steps, is awaiting additional external funding to progress further.

# Positive IDeA Peer Review

In November, the Chorley Partnership underwent an external review from the Improvement & Development Agency to assess how well the Chorley Partnership is working. The review was very positive and while it is still early days for the LSP, we are poised to make a real impact and the work that is going on within the Chorley Partnership is of a very high, innovative standard.

## 2007/8 – a year of change for the Chorley Partnership

2007/8 has been a year of rapid improvement for the Chorley Partnership.

A dedicated post of Performance Advisor (Partnership) was recruited at Chorley Council, tasked with the challenge of making the LSP more effective.

In the summer, the Sustainable Community Strategy was refreshed with more simple, streamlined priorities and targets.

Then in November, the partnership underwent a Peer Review by the Improvement and Development Agency (IdeA) that tested how well the partners of the LSP work together to improve the quality of life of Chorley. The review's overall conclusions were:

**“A sea change from a low base, going in the right direction, high ambitions and expectations, still early days but now poised to deliver real change”**

This is great news for the Chorley Partnership. The Review team were particularly impressed with the ambitious projects underway in Chorley, such as MATAC and the Vulnerable Households initiatives.

Indeed, the Chorley Partnership already has some major successes to shout about. Since 2003/4, crime has reduced by a massive 26% - last year crime reduced by 14.4% alone – a fantastic achievement for the Community Safety Thematic Partnership. Latest figures released by the ONS also show that teenage pregnancy is again starting to decline, which is great news for the Chorley Local Children's Trust.

Throughout 2007/8, six projects were supported financially by the Chorley Partnership. These are monitored at the LSP Executive every six weeks.

We've also dramatically improved communications within the Chorley Partnership by developing a communications strategy, which will focus on internal and external communications, including branding the Chorley Partnership projects and ways of getting the message of the work of the Chorley Partnership across. We now also have a quarterly newsletter that explains what's going on in the thematic groups and at a strategic level in the LSP. We also have a quarterly digest of meetings that summarises what each of the groups on the LSP have been working on and what decisions and actions have been taken.

The democratic accountability of the LSP has also been strengthened, with performance reports now being scrutinised by Elected Members of the Council on a quarterly basis.

Structural improvements have also been made to make the LSP more effective. For example, it now has a new constitution, which codifies terms of reference for each thematic group and sets out the performance management reporting arrangements for the LSP.

The Local Public Service Board merged with the Executive in September 2007, to streamline the number of meetings the chief officers from Chorley's public services are expected to attend, and to make the LSP more focused at a strategic level on the issues affecting Chorley.

The Children and Young People's thematic partnership has also now become the Chorley Local Children's Trust, focussing on strategic issues for the young people of Chorley, facilitated by Lancashire County Council, in line with its countywide guidance on Children's Trusts in Lancashire.

# New Faces on the Chorley Partnership

## A New Chair for the Chorley Partnership

Every two years, the Chorley Partnership elects its Chair. The Chair is elected by the Board members, unless there is only one uncontested nominee – they will then become Chair without the need for an election. This year, Allan Jones, the CEO of Porter Lancastrian Ltd, takes over the reigns from Lincoln Shields. Lincoln has been Chair of the LSP since 2006. A prominent member of the business sector in Chorley, Lincoln will continue to be an ambassador for Chorley by remaining on the Board as a private sector representative. The Chorley Partnership would like to express its thanks to Lincoln for giving up his spare time to Chair the partnership, and for his contribution to the development of the LSP over the last two years.

Allan is currently Chair of the Economic Regeneration theme group of the Chorley Partnership. He has worked very hard over the last few years to ensure Chorley is in the best position to attract inward investment. Allan gives a lot of his spare time to promote Chorley at business events as a place to relocate or start new businesses.

Allan is a great ambassador for Chorley and we are delighted to have him chair the Chorley Partnership over the next two years.



## New Board VCFS members

The Chorley Partnership Board makes provision for 10 seats to be held by representatives of the voluntary and community and faith sectors, four, three and three seats each respectively.

Every two years the Stronger and More Involved Communities group facilitates the election onto the Board of the seven voluntary and community representatives. The Faith sector decide their three representatives through the Chorley Forum of Faith, Churches Together Chorley and the Rural Churches Together bodies.

The 10 re-elected VCFS representatives will now sit on the Chorley Partnership Board, from June 2008 until June 2010.

# Looking Back – 2007/8 In Review

Each year the Chorley Partnership will monitor the ‘state of Chorley’, as part of its performance management framework. Here we look at changes in key demographic data, such as employment and deprivation statistics, house prices, health statistics and life expectancy, to determine the impact that the Chorley Partnership is having in achieving its vision in the Sustainable Community Strategy.

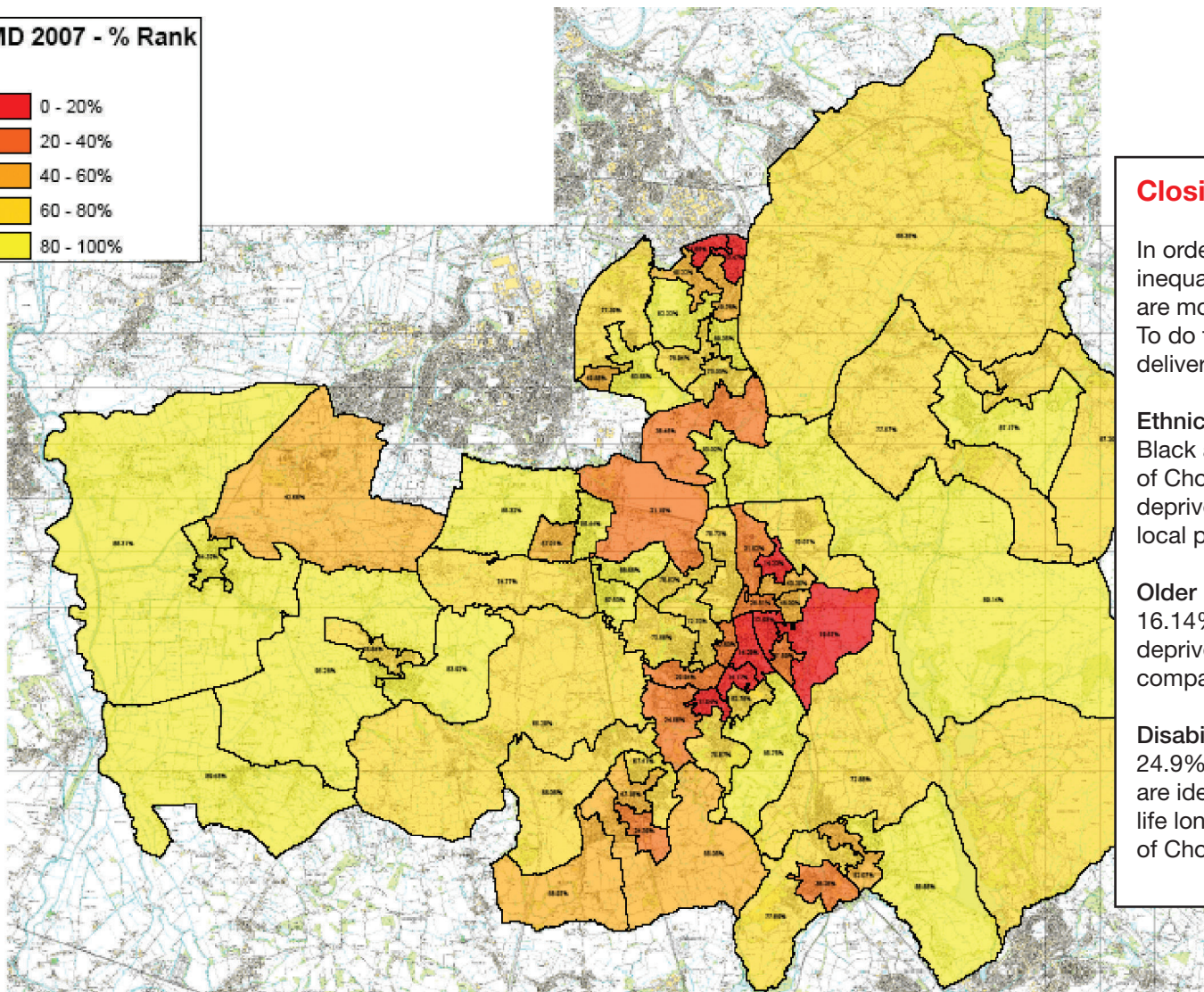
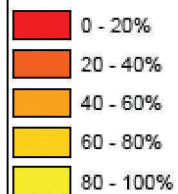
## Deprivation

The recent publication of the new Indices of Multiple Deprivation places Chorley in an improved position compared to 2004, having moved 16 places up the rankings from 172nd most deprived to 188th most deprived, out of 354 local authorities across the country.

We still have eight super output areas that are classed as being 20% most deprived. These are (in order of most deprived):

1. Moor Road North / Eaves Green Rd area (within **Chorley South West** ward)
2. Clayton Brook North West (within **Clayton-le-Woods North** ward)
3. Area between Stump Lane and Lyons Lane (within **Chorley East** ward)
4. Clayton Brook North East (within **Clayton-le-Woods North** ward)
5. East of Pall Mall / West of Pilling Lane area (within **Chorley South East** ward)
6. Botany Bay / Thornhill estate area (within **Chorley North East** ward)
7. Chorley town centre East (within **Chorley South East** ward)
8. Cowling / Eaves Lane South / Healey Nab area (within **Chorley East** ward)

### IMD 2007 - % Rank



### Closing the Gap: Equality Monitoring

In order for us to target our activity to close the gap of inequality in Chorley, we need to know which groups are more likely to be classed as living in deprivation. To do this, we monitor population changes to help us deliver more targeted services.

#### Ethnicity

Black and Minority Ethnic residents make up 3.6% of Chorley's overall population. Yet in the 20% most deprived areas, BME residents make up 6.64% of the local population.

#### Older people

16.14% of the population within the 20% most deprived, are over 65 (men) and over 60 (women), compared to 18.1% for the whole borough.

#### Disability

24.9% of residents in the 20% most deprived areas are identified as being registered as disabled (limiting life long illness), compared with 18.5% for the whole of Chorley.

## Unemployment

Unemployment (when measured by those claiming benefits) rose slightly in Chorley, from 1.6 in 2006/7, to 1.7 in 2007/8.

This chart compares Chorley's position to the rest of Lancashire and the North West.

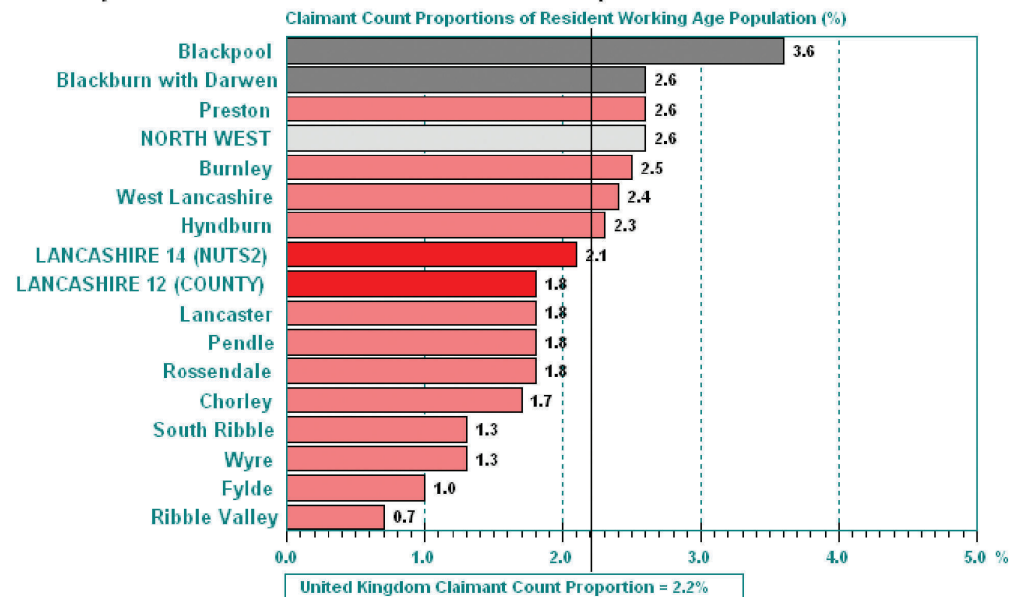
Chorley's position is still well below the UK average of 2.2%.

## How have we influenced employment?

The Chorley Partnership can claim to have contributed to these through the following initiatives:

- Pilot employment charter promoting employing local people
- Marketing Chorley as a place to invest
- 74 new businesses established and supported
- 1340 jobs created/preserved

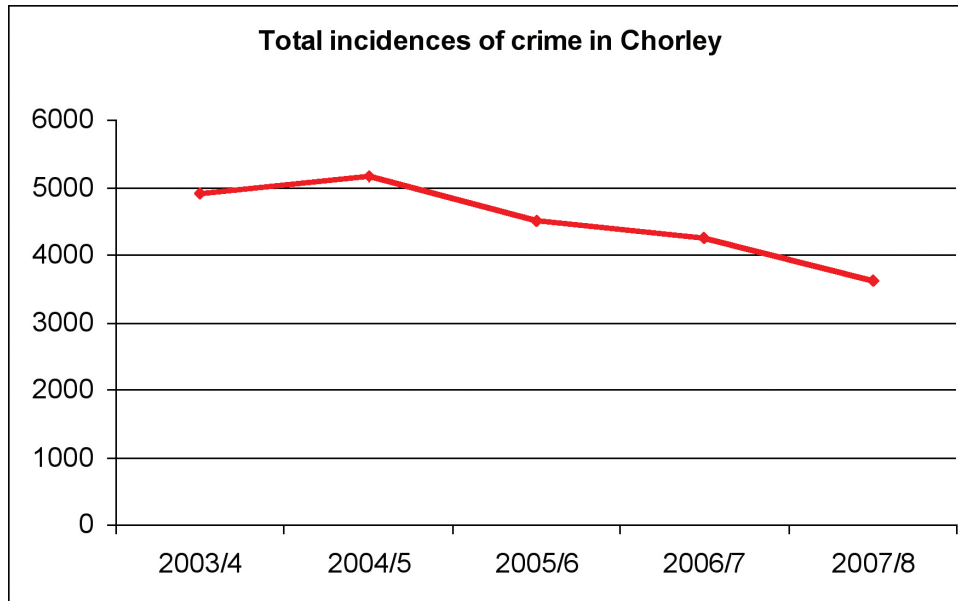
March 2008 - Claimant Count Proportions (%) of the Resident Working Age Population for Lancashire County and the 12 Lancashire Districts, the Lancashire NUTS2 Area and the two Unitary Authorities of Blackburn with Darwen & Blackpool, the North West and the UK



Note: Resident Working Age Population = Males Aged 16-64 and Females Aged 16-59 Years of Age.  
Source: Office for National Statistics via the National On-line Man-Power Information System (ILO.M.I.S.)

## Crime

Crime reduction in Chorley over the last five years is our big success story. From a total number of 4901 crimes in 2003/4, targeted partnership working between the various agencies involved in the Community Safety Partnership has resulted in crime falling by 26%, to a total number of 3632 crimes, which is fantastic news for the people of Chorley.



### How has the Chorley Partnership reduced crime so dramatically?

- The main tool has been through our innovative Multi Agency Tasking and Co-ordination groups, which involve many agencies working together, using sophisticated GIS software to plot 'hotspots' of crime in the borough, so that community safety resources can be deployed more effectively.
- We also have great working relationships between the organisations involved in the Community Safety Partnership.



## Affordable Housing

As of the end of March 2008, average house prices in Chorley were £172,919, an overall increase of 8.8% on this time last year. While since March 2008, prices are falling nationally, due to current housing market conditions, Chorley's average house prices remain out of reach for many local people attempting to get on the property ladder. Affordable housing remains a big challenge for Chorley.

District	Average Price £	Change since March 2007
Ribble Valley	265,381	20.7%
Fylde	190,502	-2.0%
West Lancashire	188,672	3.1%
<b>Chorley</b>	<b>172,919</b>	<b>8.8%</b>
Wyre	170,568	1.8%
South Ribble	160,084	1.6%
Lancaster	154,484	3.7%
Rosendale	132,125	2.7%
Preston	130,704	-7.3%
Pendle	113,908	10.4%
Hyndburn	105,802	2.6%
Burnley	94,608	6.4%

### What are we doing about this?

- Chorley Council is investing £2.3m in affordable housing over the next three years
- We have developed an affordable housing framework to influence planning decisions
- Various affordable housing developments going on in the borough
- Redefining affordable housing, using median income earnings to make the affordable housing definition more realistic

**Life Expectancy**

Life expectancy at birth is one of the overarching health targets introduced by the government. It is calculated based on an estimate of the average number of years a newborn baby would survive in a particular area, taking into consideration health data, employment, educational attainment rates, air quality – and many other factors affecting people’s quality of life. The national Public Service Agreement (PSA) for improving the health of the population aims to:

Increase the life expectancy at birth in England to 78.6 years for men and to 82.5 years for women by 2010 and;

Reduce the inequalities in life expectancy at birth by at least 10% between the lowest fifth of local authority districts and the average for England by 2010

Overall life expectancy in Chorley, reported in 2008 but based on 2006 statistics, is 76.7 years for men and 80.8 years for women – just below the national average but above the average for the north west region.

	<b>England &amp; Wales Average</b>	<b>North West Average</b>	<b>Chorley Average</b>
Females	81.5 years	80.3 years	80.8 years
Males	77.2 years	75.8 years	76.7 years

\*NB ward data for 2007/8 unavailable at time of writing

## Health

One of the key issues facing Chorley that we identified in last year's re-refresh of the Sustainable Community Strategy was that of alcohol related harm.

This table shows that Chorley still has a large problem with alcohol-related harm compared with the rest of Lancashire, with the second highest number of alcohol-related hospital admissions per 1,000,000 population out of all of Lancashire.

	2006/7	2007/08
Preston	2226	2450
<b>Chorley</b>	<b>2106</b>	<b>2432</b>
Hyndburn	1699	2152
South Ribble	1802	2046
Burnley	2100	2170
Rosendale	1754	1867
Pendle	1788	1883
<b>Lancashire Average</b>	<b>1666</b>	<b>1820</b>
West Lancashire	1561	1668
Lancaster	1549	1617
Ribble Valley	1114	1269
Fylde	1153	1272
Wyre	1141	1264

## What are we doing about this?

The Community Safety Partnership is delivering three high-profile alcohol harm reduction campaigns throughout 2008/9 to communicate the dangers of alcohol abuse.

### Childhood Obesity

District	Obesity as a percentage of primary school children
Wyre	6.8%
Fylde	7.9%
Ribble Valley	7.9%
Hyndburn	8.4%
<b>Chorley</b>	<b>9.3%</b>
South Ribble	9.6%
<b>Lancashire Average</b>	<b>9.9%</b>
Preston	9.8%
Lancaster	9.9%
Rossendale	10.1%
Pendle	11.2%
West Lancs	11.6%
Burnley	11.9%

These statistics from the North West Public Health Observatory suggest that 9.3% of Chorley's school age children are classed as obese. This is just below the Lancashire average of 9.9%.

### Teenage Pregnancy

District	2005 rate	2006 rate
Burnley	50.0	55.1
Chorley	45.3	40.4
Fylde	25.0	30.6
Hyndburn	56.5	46.5
Lancaster	36.1	47.8
Pendle	58.9	42.6
Preston	52.6	44.1
Ribble Valley	17.3	26.1
Rossendale	47.9	39.5
S. Ribble	35.9	36.6
West Lancs	36.9	38.6
Wyre	27.1	30.7

(The conception rates are per 1000 young women aged 15-17)

The most recent statistics for teenage pregnancy show that in one year teenage pregnancy dropped by 10 percentage points – great news for the young people of Chorley.

# Making An Impact

## The Chorley Partnership Projects 2007/8

### Reducing Teenage Pregnancy in Chorley (The Children and Young People's Theme Group)

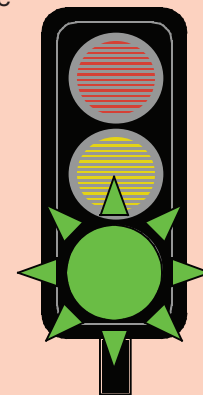
This project involved the formulation of a targeted action plan for Chorley, following a high number of incidents of teenage pregnancy in certain areas of Chorley.

Already the results are very encouraging. Recent statistics released show that teenage pregnancy is beginning to fall in Chorley, although we are still some way off achieving the Government's target of a 50% reduction in under 18 conceptions by 2010. In 1998, 41.0 per 1,000 15 – 17 year old girls. By 2006, the most recent data published, this figure has reduced slightly by 1.5%, to 40.4.

The action plan has so far achieved the following successes:

- An increase access and availability of young people's sexual health services in Chorley, indicated by an over 70% increase in young people attending the 'Wise-up' service over one year
- School delivery of sexual health lessons have increased following training of professionals working with young people – particularly in secondary schools
- Sexual health outreach workers have been appointed in Chorley Young People's Service and will work directly within the hotspot areas; with groups of young people most at risk of early pregnancy
- Various professionals across partner organisations including schools, Children's Centres, family support services, voluntary organisations etc, have completed sexual health advice training.
- To educate and raise awareness in young people of the realities of teenage parenthood, a group of young mums have been trained as peer educators. They have developed a programme on the 'realities of teenage parenthood' delivered to an audience at Albany High School and are returning at the end of the school year to deliver more targeted sessions.

The plan will continue to be monitored by the Chorley Local Children's Trust (formerly the Young People's Partnership) throughout 2008/9.

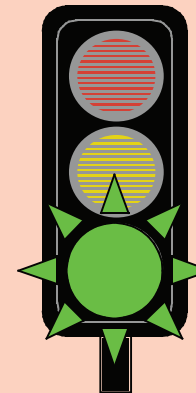


### Multi Agency Tasking and Co-Ordination (MATAC) (The Community Safety Partnership)

MATAC is a new way of working that involves a range of community safety partners meeting every month to share information and intelligence on a range of issues affecting community safety, including environmental crime. Using sophisticated planning technology, including Geographic Information Systems, crime 'hotspots' can be identified and resources deployed in those areas, at those times, more effectively.

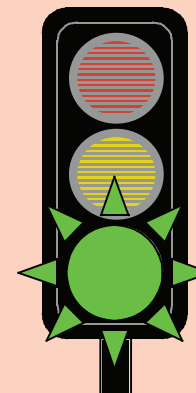
MATAC has been a huge success for the Community Safety Partnership. In one year alone, 2007/8, crime reduced by 14.4% on the previous year. The Community Safety Partnership received a letter of congratulations from the Home Office, citing its continued good performance.

MATAC has now been mainstreamed as a standard way of working by both the Police and the Council.



### Marketing Chorley (The Economic Regeneration Partnership)

The Economic Regeneration theme group have had a busy year promoting Chorley as a place to invest in. The first phase of the Marketing Chorley project has made progress this year. In particular, the Revolution, our Strategic Regional site, had its official launch. Consultation has been carried out on the re-vamp of the town centre and further copies of the town centre strategy have been made available to the public and investors. Chorley markets have undergone further promotion this year. Chorley is now clearly visible at exhibitions with branded stands on display at key economic events and strategic locations throughout the borough. The Business section of the Chorley Council website is also now updated to be more useful to Chorley businesses. There is still some way to go, particularly in the printing and distribution of the inward investment packs, which will follow this year in the second phase of the project.



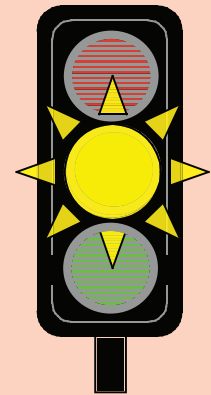
**First Steps (The Neighbourhood, Environment and Streetscene Group)**

The First Steps project identified three sites within our eight most deprived areas in Chorley to target for environmental improvement.

Plans have been developed to improve access to the Laburnum Rd nature area/pond for disabled access and site improvement, although physical work has not yet been undertaken due to delays in accessing external funding.

A detailed plan to improve the village centre at Clayton Brook Village has been developed using the Chorley Partnership and additional external funding from Lancashire County Council.

A clean-up day took place on the Laburnum Road pond Area on 12, June with the remainder of the work scheduled to be completed by the end of October 2008.



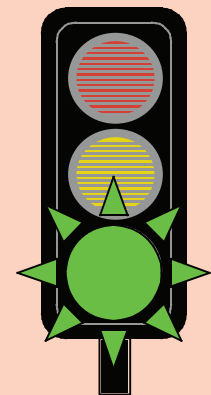
**Building a Chorley Community Network (Stronger and More Involved Communities)**

In excess of 130 organisations have signed up to the new Network.

All signed up organisations have been given the chance to register their volunteering opportunities with the volunteer centre resulting in over 100 new volunteering opportunities now being shown on the volunteer centre database.

21 volunteers have already been referred to these new opportunities.

The number of volunteers registering with the volunteers centre during November to February (inclusive) has increased by 4% over the same period last year due to additional publicity around volunteering in the community as part of the Chorley Community Network initiative. As further opportunities are developed the numbers are expected to increase even further.



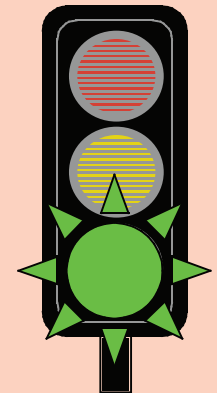
### Vulnerable Households (Chorley and South Ribble Partnerships)

This project is being run by both the Chorley and South Ribble LSPs. It is a multi-agency family intervention project that seeks to provide intensive, 'joined up' support to 15 problem families in each borough currently placing a considerable demand on numerous agencies. It is estimated that if this project is a success, and family breakdown can be avoided, then £330,000 of public money could be saved.

The project will be co-ordinated by a Co-ordinator, hosted at National Children's Homes charity, who have a wealth of experience in family intervention work throughout the country. The project has been delayed slightly this year due to the difficulties in filling this post, but this has now been achieved.

The next phase of this project is to work out how we are going to monitor our performance with each family, and methodology and criteria for the selection of the 15 families in Chorley.

A performance management framework is yet to be developed and discussions are ongoing with NCH as to how to develop baselines for individual families, to be able to demonstrate improvement at the end of the project. A more detailed project plan outlining the implementation phase of the project is now under development.





## Other Successes

### The Chorley Smile Campaign

The Chorley Smile Campaign, pioneered by the Council and adopted by the Chorley Partnership, is Chorley's new civic pride Campaign. It is a campaign to encourage residents to take pride in their areas. Pledge cards have been produced to get residents to sign up to the campaign, pledging to 'do their bit' for the community. The Council has promised in return to deliver the highest possible quality services it can. Other aspects of the Chorley Smile Campaign include the all-new Chorley Smile Awards, the civic award ceremony, and neighbourhood-specific campaigns such as the Weeks of Action.

Chorley  
Smile



### Weeks of Action Pilot



The Weeks of Action, under the banner of the Chorley Smile Campaign, is another great example of partners working together to tackle issues relating to crime and anti-social behaviour, community reassurance and engagement, health and wellbeing, along with cleaner, greener environments, while showing residents how they can make a difference in their community.

Over 20 agencies are involved in Weeks of Action, including the Council, Police, PCT, Fire and Rescue Service, DVLA, etc.

The first Week of Action was held in Chorley East. At the end of the week, Chorley Council had dealt with four cases of graffiti and removed almost 100 bags of fly-tipped rubbish. At the same time, the Police and the DVLA had more successes, seizing cars for having no insurance, prosecuting drivers for using their mobile phone, having no MOT and car tax, and using red diesel, among others. A number of drug raids were carried out, with arrests made, as well as youth referrals issued and alcohol seized from juveniles. Trading Standards also conducted test purchases on seven off-licences in the area and five of them failed. Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service also had 35 people visiting their mobile fire station, which resulted in 35 home fire safety checks. The Chorley Smile Community Trailer proved very popular with nearly 100 people taking advantage of the free advice from agencies such as the Council, Runshaw College and Chorley Community Housing.

### The 'Choose Chorley' Employment Charter

This year saw the launch of the Chorley Employment Charter, a new initiative designed to help companies to recruit local people. The Economic Regeneration thematic partnership will provide a package of support to companies relocating to Chorley, or new businesses opening up here, tailored to the needs of a company. Including:

- ensuring that the right candidates are identified for the right jobs
- providing interview facilities and administration support to help run effective recruitment campaigns
- Training and skills provision

The Charter will also help target those living in under-privileged areas, and identify candidates for training in order to be able to apply for local jobs. Partners involved include Chorley Council, Job Centre Plus, Learning and Skills Council, Runshaw Business Centre, among others.

# Sustainable Community Strategy Targets – How are we doing?

Another part of our performance management framework is monitoring our targets. The targets in the Sustainable Community Strategy run for three years, from 2007/8 through to 2009/10.

For most of these indicators, we can now report the first year's outturn on these targets.

KEY ☺ = hit      ☹ = no change since last year      ☹ = missed

## Priority one Ensuring that Chorley is the pulse of a thriving Central Lancashire economy

Indicator	Baseline (2006/7)	Target 2007/8	Outturn 2007/8	Improvement on last year?	Performance Against Target
No.of jobs created/preserved	226	248	1340	☺	☺
No.of new businesses established	53	53	74	☺	☺
Business floor space created/improved	41949m2	46143m2	66,143m2	☺	☺
Town centre visitor satisfaction on range and choice of shops	33%	37%	Not measured this year	☹	☹
Vacant town centre floorspace	8%	7.5%	7%	☺	☺
Increase median workplace earnings gap between Chorley and Lancashire	+0.42%	+1%	No new data published	☹	☹
Percentage of working age moving into sustainable employment and ceasing to claim Incapacity Benefit and Income Support	0.2% below the national average	0.2% below the national average	No new data published	☹	☹

**Priority two Improving life chances for all**

Indicator	Baseline (2006/7)	Target 2007/8	Outturn 2007/8	Improvement on last year?	Performance Against Target
Reduction in no. of Super Output Areas in 20% most deprived ranking	8	8	8	☺	☺
Reduction in inequality of life expectancy between highest and lowest wards	7.2 years	7.1 years	No recent data published	☺	☺
Reduction in teenage pregnancy rate per 1000 under 18 year olds	45.3 in 2005	40.3 in 2006	40.4 in 2006	☺	☹
Increase in number of affordable houses built	51 (cumulative figure since Jan 06)	250 (target is by March 09)	68 (cumulative figure since Jan 06)	☺	☹

**Priority three Developing local solutions to global climate change**

Indicator	Baseline (2006/7)	Target 2007/8	Outturn 2007/8	Improvement on last year?	Performance Against Target
Increase in household waste recycling (including household waste recycled and composted) in Chorley	44.47% of all household waste	47% of all household waste	47.29%	☺	☺
Reduction in waste sent to landfill	23,078 tonnes	22,499 tonnes	21,686	☺	☺
Reduce Chorley's domestic CO2 emissions	2.6 tonnes per capita	Reduction of 1%	No new data published	☺	☺
Reduce Chorley's CO2 emissions (excluding ETS & Motorways)	6.2 tonnes per capita	Reduction of 1%	No new data published	☺	☺

Taking into account increases in number of households

ETS (Emissions Trading Scheme) companies and motorways are governed by national and European carbon reduction policies and are outside of the influence of the Chorley Partnership

#### Priority four Developing the character and feel of Chorley as a good place to live, work and play

Indicator	Baseline (2006/7)	Target 2007/8	Outturn 2007/8	Improvement on last year?	Performance Against Target
Reduce crime in the borough	4901 crimes (2003/4)	4166 crimes	3632 crimes	☺	☺
Improvement in street cleanliness	7%	5.3%	4.7%	☺	☺
<b>Increase in percent of people satisfied with:</b>					
Museums	25%	51%	Not measured this year	☹	☹
Sports facilities	60%	63%	65.4%	☺	☺
Theatres	22%	53%	23.6%	☺	☹
Parks and Open Spaces	75%	76%	74.3%	☹	☹
Chorley as a place to live	76%	77%	Not measured this year	☺	☺
The urban and rural environment	75%	77%	Not measured this year	☺	☺

#### Priority five Building stronger communities

Indicator	Baseline (2006/7)	Target 2007/8	Outturn 2007/8	Improvement on last year?	Performance Against Target
Percent of people who feel that their communities are places where people get on well together	63%	65%	Not measured this year	☺	☺
To increase volunteering in Chorley	62%	63%	Not measured this year	☺	☺
<b>Increase in percent of people satisfied with:</b>					
Public transport, over the last three years	74%	75%	Not measured this year	☺	☺
Reducing dissatisfaction with opportunities to participate in decision making	24%	22%	Not measured this year	☺	☺

# Looking Ahead – Making a Difference in 2008/9

## The New Projects

Lots of work is ongoing between the various agencies involved in the Chorley Partnership every year. In addition to this, the Chorley Partnership also pump-primes strategic projects that will help us to tackle the five priorities of the sustainable community strategy.

This year, the Chorley Partnership has a £90,000 pump-priming budget, from Chorley Council. The following projects will receive Chorley Partnership funding over the next 12 months.

### ‘One World Living’

Delivery of training/information sessions to Chorley businesses on the impact of climate change, help available to reduce energy costs, the commercial opportunities posed by climate change. £3000 awarded for three facilitated workshops, facilitated by Groundwork.

### ‘Girls Aloud’

A targeted nine-week pilot course aimed at Year nine girls at Albany Science College, which has the highest rates of teenage pregnancy in Chorley. The course will teach girls about the harsh realities of teenage pregnancy, raise self-esteem and aspirations and increase awareness of the dangers of ‘risky behaviour’. The course ends with a two day residential to consolidate their learning and participate in a ‘Virtual Baby’ exercise. £4988 awarded.

### ‘Family Support’

This project will provide support to the most vulnerable families in Chorley by volunteers trained by Homestart, working in partnership with social workers, health visitors, maternity units etc., to visit families in their homes who might be experiencing factors contributing to social exclusion. Over 50 more volunteers will be targeted as part of this project, with particular priority given to supporting teenage parents. £10,000 awarded.

### ‘Weeks of Action’

To continue the successful programme of targeted ‘Weeks of Action’, focussing on enforcement of crime and ASB, community reassurance and engagement, along with cleaner, greener environments, with a further five Weeks of Action planned. £10,000 awarded.

### ‘Time Banks in Chorley’

Time Banks are an innovative new concept designed to tap into the knowledge, skills and connections of local people. They make available many more opportunities and incentives for local people to feel useful and valued. Participants deposit their time in the bank by giving practical help and support to others and are able to withdraw their time when they need something done themselves. £10,000 awarded.

### ‘Supporting Economic Rural Diversification’

We have identified a need to offer further support to new businesses in rural areas of Chorley. This project will offer targeted outreach support to new and young businesses in rural areas, such as grant assistance and other advice. Match funding is also being sought from the rural development programme for England. Target 10 new rural businesses, 10 businesses supported with grant assistance, five twoyr+ businesses supported. £10,000 awarded.

**‘Marketing Chorley phase two’**

An extension of last year’s project, this phase will improve the business area on [www.chorley.gov.uk](http://www.chorley.gov.uk); produce an inward investment pack, produce a business events timetable to 2008/9 and develop a database of new, existing and start-up customers to help target further marketing activity in the borough. £10,000 awarded.

**‘Circle of Need’**

Circle of Need is a model of service delivery that has huge potential to deliver real cost savings. The project aims to provide our customers with related services when they contact us, by linking different needs together. For example, if someone needs temporary accommodation they may also need housing, financial help, food or health support. The idea is to understand all these needs at the first point by understanding the relationships between them. The model brings together Council services with others from government departments and the voluntary sector to provide a truly ‘joined up’ service. £15,000 awarded.

**‘Promoting Awareness of Mental Health’**

The project will promote positive messages about mental health. The key driver for this project was the response to the possible site of a mental health facility in Buckshaw Village. Central to the project will be a mental health promotion marketing campaign to dispel negative images about mental health in Chorley. £3000 awarded.

**Alcohol Consequences Campaign**

Run in conjunction with the PCT’s substance misuse team, a campaign to raise awareness of alcohol harm will be run in the form of an outdoor media campaign on buses, ad shells, train station posters, beer mats, etc. Summer and Christmas campaigns are also planned. £10,000 awarded.

**Chorley Community Network**

The second phase of the project initiated last year will consolidate the database of VCF organisations already contacted and signed up to the network. The database will be made accessible to the public via a website with links back to the Chorley Partnership page. The work will continue around recruiting VCF organisations to the network, with the group applying for external funding to make the project sustainable.

We will continue to monitor last year’s projects that will still be ongoing into 2008/9 and report progress at each LSP Executive meeting.

# The Local Area Agreement 2008 – 2011

Since the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act (2007), more emphasis has been placed on Local Strategic Partnerships delivering the Local Area Agreement (also known as the LAA).

A new set of national performance indicators has been published, replacing Best Value Performance Indicators. These new National Indicators are cross-cutting in nature and require local authorities and their partners to work together in their delivery. The Lancashire Partnership has selected 34 indicators to feature in the new Local Area Agreement that reflect the priorities for Lancashire.

Some targets have been disaggregated down to district level, which will allow the Chorley Partnership to monitor its progress in the achievement of these targets.

Attached to the targets are reward grants – if the LAA is achieved then partners will receive reward grants (how this is to be distributed is as yet unclear).

These are the LAA stretch targets that we need to achieve over the next three years (C) indicates a countywide target only.

Ref.	Indicator	2007/8 baseline	2008/9	2009/10	2010/11
NI 1	People from different backgrounds getting on well together (including neutral responses)	81%	82%	83%	84%
NI 4	People who feel that they can influence decisions in their locality	34%	35%	36%	37%
NI 6	Participation in regular volunteering	17%	18%	19%	20%
NI 7	Environment for a thriving third sector	22% (C)	3 year county-wide target of 26.1% proposed		
NI 16	Serious acquisitive crime rate	8.27	3 year target		1% reduction over 3 years
NI 20	Assault with injury crime rate	6.3 per 1000 population			2% reduction over 3 years



Ref.	Indicator	2007/8 baseline	2008/9	2009/10	2010/11
NI 30	Re-offending rate of prolific and priority offenders	No baseline yet			
NI 39	Alcohol-harm related hospital admission rates	2432	2784	3160	3554
NI 40	Drug users in effective treatment	3763 (C)	3838 (C)	3915 (C)	3993 (C)
NI 47	People killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents	912 (C)	879 (C)	812 (C)	761 (C)
NI 49	Number of primary fires and related fatalities and non-fatal casualties, excluding precautionary checks	225	177	168	158
NI 50	Emotional Health of Children	90.5% (C)	Awaiting results of Pupil Attitude survey		
NI 55	Obesity among primary school age children in Reception Year (percent of children recorded as being obese)	9.3%	9.6%	9.8%	9.9%
NI 110	Young people's participation in positive activities	69.5%	Awaiting results of the Tell Us survey		
NI 112	Under 18 conception rate	41 (40.4)	-25.9%	-37%	-50%
NI 117	16 - 18 year olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET)	6.3%	5.6%	5.4%	5.2%
NI 119	Self-reported measure of people's overall health and wellbeing	77.1%	78.1%	79.1%	80.1%
NI 120	All-age all cause mortality rate	M760 F499	M724 F484	M703 F472	M683 F460

# The Local Area Agreement 2008 – 2011

Ref.	Indicator	2007/8 baseline	2008/9	2009/10	2010/11
NI 123	16+ current smoking rate prevalence (number of four week quitters)	924 (C)	934 (C)	943 (C)	953 (C)
NI 124	People with a long-term condition supported to be independent and in control of their condition	No baseline yet			
NI 137	Healthy life expectancy at age 65	11.5 (men) 13.3 (women)	TBC	TBC	TBC
NI 139	People over 65 who say that they receive the information, assistance and support needed to exercise choice and control to live independently	76%	To maintain performance (county wide baseline 70%, three year target 75%)		
NI 142	Number of vulnerable people who are supported to maintain independent living	76%	Maintain performance (County-wide target of 75% after three years)		
NI 153	Working age people claiming out of work benefits in the worst performing neighbourhoods	27.6%	three year target		1% reduction over three years
NI 155	Number of affordable homes delivered (gross)	9	50	50	50
NI 163	Working age population qualified to at least Level two or higher	65.7%	5.58% improvement	7.4% improvement	9.3% improvement
NI 165	Working age population qualified to at least Level four or higher	22.8%	27.1%	28.1%	30.08%
NI 166	Average earnings of employees in the area	£419.40	£447.50	£465.00	£482.50
NI 171	VAT / new business registration rate	No baseline yet			
NI 186	Per capita CO2 emissions in the LA area (tonnes per capita)	7.2 (C)	6.96 % reduction (C)	9.75% reduction (C)	12.5% reduction (C)

Ref.	Indicator	2007/8 baseline	2008/9	2009/10	2010/11
NI 187	Tackling fuel poverty – people receiving income based benefits living in homes with a low energy efficiency rating	No baseline yet			
NI 188	Adapting to climate change	Level 0	Level one	Level two	Level three
NI 192	Household Waste recycled and composted	47.19% 41% (c)	1% improvement	2% improvement	3% improvement
NI 195	Improved street and environmental cleanliness (levels of graffiti, litter, detritus and fly posting (Using LEQSE methodology)	Litter 10% Detritus 24% Graffiti 3% Fly posting 1%	Litter 10% Detritus 22% Graffiti 3% Fly posting 1%	Litter 9% Detritus 20% Graffiti 3% Fly posting 1%	Litter 9% Detritus 17% Graffiti 3% Fly posting 1%
NI 197	Improved local biodiversity – active management of local sites	5% of sites (C)	8% of sites (C)	11% of sites (C)	14% of sites (C)

## Local Targets (No reward grant attached)

Ref.	Indicator	2007/8 baseline	2008/9	2009/10	2010/11
	Tackling domestic violence	62% (C)	three year target		70% (C)
	Criminal damage	28,895 (C)	21,553 (C)	target only for one year	
	Preventing violent extremism	Scale 0 (C)	three year target		Scale four (C)
NI 78	Reduction in number of schools where fewer than 30% of pupils achieve five or more A* - C grades at GCSE and equivalent (inc English and Maths)	20% (C)	11% (C)	5% (C)	3% (C)
	Oral Health	32%	29.99%	29.32%	28.65%
NI 156	No of households living in temporary accommodation	26	30	13	13
NI 135	Carers receiving needs assessment or review and a specific carer's service, or advice and information	24.1%	25.3%	26.6%	27.9%
	Working age people on out of work benefits	10%	three year target		12.2%
NI 152	No. of new homes granted planning permission per year	419	417	834	1251
	No. of new homes constructed	121	230	324	417

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# A wider conversation effective scrutiny of local strategic partnerships





# introduction

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Councils have a unique community leadership role. The challenge to councillors is to:

- **lead** the provision of public services in the area
- **engage** with local communities and stakeholders
- **define** with them the future of the place represented
- **achieve** the strategies and vision which people agree.

This is what the best councils are doing, and their legitimacy derives from their role as democratic bodies. All councillors – not just the executive – have a role in community leadership. The overview and scrutiny of strategic partnerships is one vital way of ensuring councillors are engaged in this.

This publication discusses the scrutiny of local strategic partnerships. It aims to be helpful to a range of audiences, including councillors and staff involved in scrutiny, and organisations, particularly non-council public services, which are involved in LSPs and may become involved in scrutiny.

It explores how councillors can use overview and scrutiny to help make a reality of community leadership. This includes:

- strategy development
- involving local people and community organisations in scrutiny activity
- developing the dialogue with public service providers outside and inside the council
- reviewing whether goals are being achieved and what can be done to enhance performance and achievement.

It also shows how scrutiny can achieve positive outcomes for other public services.

Scrutiny was initially seen as providing challenge to the council's own service performance. That remains one aspect of the role, but much of the most effective work of scrutiny bodies has involved engagement with wider community and public service issues. Imaginative forms of engagement are being used to involve local people, service users and others in scrutiny. This is the wider conversation that scrutiny can lead.

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# scrutiny of local strategic partnerships

## the key challenges

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The wider uses of scrutiny have come from local initiatives, using the right to investigate any issue of concern to the area. Specific powers to scrutinise health services have been added to this. More recently, new legislation (discussed later), is expanding the powers of scrutiny.

This will encourage scrutiny of the Local Strategic Partnership and its sub-partnerships, and there will be a particular emphasis on Local Area Agreements. Even before they gain further powers, councils are showing what can be done to lead a dialogue with other service providers and bridge the democratic deficit.

### the key challenges

03

The key challenges for council scrutiny of Local Strategic Partnerships are:

#### enhancing the democratic leadership of partnerships

- widening the understanding and engagement of elected members with partnership work
- bringing the knowledge of local issues and communities which ward councillors have, to service providers involved in partnerships
- holding the leadership of strategic partnerships, including council representatives, to account.

#### helping to build, not undermine, effective partnership work

- using scrutiny projects to bring partner organisations together to find new ways of working jointly to tackle important local problems
- communicating, raising the profile of scrutiny and its work priorities, and developing understanding of roles
- building alliances with the council executive and other stakeholders to gain support for recommendations.

## 04

**adding value**

- working towards positive recommendations and improvements
- ensuring council scrutiny concentrates on what only scrutiny can do, rather than duplicating the work of regulators and inspectorates.

**improving the performance of partnerships**

- helping to make performance management more locally defined rather than top-down from central government and its agencies
- using scrutiny to dig out the issues behind the statistics – for example, in reviewing performance on Local Area Agreements.

**widening the conversation**

- giving a public forum to service providers to gain greater awareness of what they are trying to do
- using scrutiny to engage local people with service providers, involving ward councillors, neighbourhoods, users and communities
- hearing a wider range of voices, clarifying problems and developing more ideas and solutions.

# understanding local strategic partnerships

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This section provides practical information about Local Strategic Partnerships and summarises the different types of partnerships in which local government is involved.

Definitions are given of Local Strategic Partnerships, community strategy, Local Public Service Agreements, and Local Area Agreements. It also sets out the strategic partnership requirements for councils in England and key strategic plans that relate to them, and provide a summary of the legal framework for the scrutiny of services external to the council.

## types of partnership in which local government is involved

This publication covers Local Strategic Partnerships and their sub-groups. There are many other projects involving local government that could be termed partnerships, including:

- contracting and procurement – including big, council-wide partnerships with the private sector, often also called ‘strategic partnerships/ partnering’
- Public-Private Partnerships and Private Finance Initiative (PFI) projects
- area and neighbourhood based partnership initiatives such as Sure Start and New Deal for Communities

- grant aid to local organisations – often involving representation of the council on a board or management committee
- compact (an overarching protocol) with the voluntary sector
- specific funded projects with the voluntary sector
- regional and sub-regional working arrangements
- formal multi-council arrangements such as Passenger Transport Authorities
- informal projects, networks, working groups.

As this list indicates, the full range of partnerships in which a council is involved is likely to be wide. If councillors embark on scrutiny of the council’s partnerships as a whole – potentially a very large project involving disparate organisations and activities – they should be very clear about the scope and objectives of the review.

## what is a Local Strategic Partnership?

A Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) is a single, multi-agency body that matches a council’s boundaries. LSPs aim to bring together local representatives from the public, private, community and voluntary sectors. The council generally takes a lead role but encourages the engagement of others.

## 06

In two tier (county and district) areas, a variety of arrangements is possible but generally there is some kind of LSP at both district and county levels. An LSP is not required by law but has been required for certain types of funding. LSPs are usually involved in the development of Local Area Agreements, which are explained later.

Generally, LSPs are not executive bodies, but provide a framework for liaison, co-ordination and the agreement of priorities for the locality without having many staff or large budgets of their own.

Frequently, the LSP has a structure of sub-partnerships covering issues such as crime and disorder, the environment, and so on (see below). There is often a board and a wider membership that meets less frequently.

The local government White Paper, *Strong and Prosperous Communities*, 2006, clarified the role of councils in leading LSPs. The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Bill, published in December 2006, set out legal requirements on some public services beyond the council to engage with the work of LSPs and Local Area Agreements. This legal requirement to participate in community planning already exists, in a different form, in Scotland. The White Paper also emphasised the place shaping role of councils, which will require partnership work to develop.

## sub-partnerships

There is local choice about arrangements for LSPs but most LSPs have a set of sub-partnerships, some of which are required by law. Those with a statutory base (see table) include the Children's Trust, which is not legally a trust but a partnership, and the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership. Sub-partnerships that are not required by law include culture, environment (often called Local Agenda 21, from the Rio Earth Summit in 1992), older people, health, economic development, neighbourhood renewal, and transport.

For example, the LSP for the London Borough of **Southwark**, which is called the Southwark Alliance, has the following themed sub-partnerships:

- Enterprise Task Group
- Stronger Communities Task Group
- Healthy Southwark
- Young Southwark
- Safer Southwark Partnership
- Employment Task Group.

Some LSPs are structured around the four blocks of the Local Area Agreement (LAA): Safer and Stronger Communities, Children and Young People, Healthier Communities and Older People, and Economic Development and Enterprise. There is no requirement to be structured in this way.

strategic partnerships

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England

partnership	statutory base	statutory partners	tier in county/district areas	review and assessment
Local Strategic Partnership	no legal requirement but has been a condition of neighbourhood renewal funding	No statute	Usually LSP at both tiers	Locally determined
Children's Trust arrangements	Children Act 2004 requires a children's services authority to promote co-operation between itself and other agencies, to improve children's well-being	Children's services authority, district council where appropriate, police uthority, probation board, youth offending team' strategic health authority or primary care trust, learning and skills council	County-led	Joint area review (feeding into CPA) assesses how services work together to improve children's well-being
Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership	Crime and Disorder Act 1998. Now changing with the Crime and Disorder Act Review and Police and Justice Act 2006	Councils, police, fire authority, PCT	Was district, but moving to both tiers after Police and Justice Act	Annual report to Home Office being replaced by performance management from government office for the region
Health Improvement Partnership	Health Act 1999. Likely to be affected Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Bill	All local authorities and NHS	In two tier areas, county leads	Audit Commission makes CPA assessment of joint working. Partnership must sign off local delivery plan including local joint working targets, produced by PCT and Strategic Health Authority

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**key strategies and performance agreements**

strategy	statutory base
(Sustainable) Community Strategy	Local Government Act 2000 (likely to be developed by Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Bill 2006)
Local Area Agreement	Non-statutory (statutory requirements likely to be developed by Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Bill 2006)
Local Public Service Agreement	Non-statutory – now being superceded by Local Area Agreement
Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy	Non-statutory
Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy	Crime and Disorder Act 1998, Police and Justice Act 2006
Children and Young People’s Plan	Children Act 2004
Local delivery plan (health)	Department of Health requirement, responsibility of PCT and signed by coterminous council



## what is a community strategy?

A community strategy sets out a long-term vision for a council-wide area, backed up by action plans to achieve it. Every local authority should prepare a community strategy for promoting or improving the economic, social and environmental well-being of its area and contributing to the achievement of sustainable development in the United Kingdom. This is a requirement of the Local Government Act 2000. Given the aim of contributing to sustainable development, the government now prefers the term sustainable community strategy.

The community strategy should be approved by the council, but its development should involve widespread community consultation and engagement. Usually, the LSP is involved in developing and agreeing the strategy (see above). This engages organisations beyond local government in agreeing the way forward for the area, in strategy development and implementation. The community strategy should provide a framework that also brings together more issue-based strategies, for example for the environment, children, or crime and disorder reduction. The LAA is increasingly important in implementing the community strategy.

The achievements of the community strategy action plans, including the LAA, should be monitored and problems tackled. The plans will require periodic revision.

The community strategy should clearly relate to the Local Development Plan, a strategy for spatial development and land use planning. The 2006 Local Government White Paper sets out proposals to integrate the consultation requirements of the community strategy and the Local Development Plan. The place shaping role of councils, emphasised by the *Strong and Prosperous Communities* White Paper, will make it all the important to have good integration of the area's key strategies.

## what is a Local Area Agreement?

Local Area Agreements are three-year, negotiated agreements between an upper tier council and Whitehall departments. The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Bill, published in December 2006, sets out a new legal framework for LAAs. If it is agreed by Parliament it is likely to be implemented from 2008. LAAs are likely to be of increasing importance to the work of the Local Strategic Partnership.

Currently, the agreement sets out a series of targets the council must achieve and the funding streams Whitehall will pay to the council to enable it to meet them. It also includes 'enabling measures', which are changes central government agrees for a particular area to help it meet its targets. Some targets in the LAA will also include stretch targets, which attract reward money if the local area can deliver them.

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As well as national targets negotiated with central government, the LAA should include local targets that are a priority for the local area as set out in the community strategy. Central funding can be used to help deliver local targets as well as national targets.

Though LAAs are an agreement with the upper tier council, it is expected that negotiation, ownership and delivery of the LAA will lie with the Local Strategic Partnership, and in two tier areas will include all the districts.

Within the LAA, as noted earlier, the local and national targets and the funding streams are divided into four blocks: Safer and Stronger Communities, Children and Young People, Healthier Communities and Older People, and Economic Development and Enterprise.

Funding streams many councils received in the past that are now part of an LAA include the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund, the Safer and Stronger Communities Fund, the Children's Services Grant, and the Local Enterprise Growth Initiative.

Local areas are required to have a system to deliver performance management and financial accountability for the LAA. This system should be developed locally but must be agreed by the government office for the region.

While LAAs aim to put national objectives into practice locally, primarily they should be a means of developing and delivering on local priorities, as expressed in the community strategy.

## Local Public Service Agreements

Local Public Service Agreements (LPSAs) were negotiated agreements between a council and central government that preceded the introduction of LAAs. An LPSA agreement set 12 targets over a three-year period and was owned by the council but delivered in partnership with the members of the LSP. The targets were stretch targets that were more challenging than the usual level of improvement expected from the council and its partners. Councils were given so-called pump-priming money to help achieve them and were offered reward money for each stretch target achieved in full or in part.

New LPSAs are no longer being negotiated because LPSA is now part of an LAA. As part of their LAA negotiation, councils and their partners agree additional stretch targets for some of the basic targets in the agreement. These new stretch targets attract pump priming and reward money for success in the same way as they did with LPSAs.

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## challenges for implementing Local Area Agreements

LAA's are a new initiative and they will develop a statutory framework, which the first round of agreements described here did not have. The experience of many councils is that they have not yet achieved their full potential. Councillors undertaking scrutiny will want to be aware of the specific challenges presented by LAA's so they can assess how well they are being met in their local area:

### **two-tier LAA's**

Many two tier areas have found LAA's difficult to implement. Although many counties and districts regularly work in partnership to deliver local priorities, the large number of LSP partners involved in bringing together all the councils in a county area can make deciding priorities and targets challenging. There can also be difficulties with implementation because councils operate with different performance management cycles and systems. Councils and partnerships will also want to think carefully about the reward money associated with achieving stretch targets, and the complexity in deciding how reward money will be distributed when many partners are contributing to delivery.

### **central-local relations**

The LAA should contain both central and local priorities but some councils have found it challenging to ensure local priorities are not forgotten in the process. Local areas are only required to include national priorities when it is mandatory. All the mandatory national targets have funding attached, apart from one on reducing health inequalities.

However, some LSP's have found it difficult to move away from the optional outcomes and indicators suggested in the national guidance and develop a truly local and distinctive LAA. It can also be hard for other public sector partners to commit to local priorities because they are under pressure to deliver their own national targets.

### **enabling measures**

The LAA presents a good opportunity for partners in the LSP to identify areas where being able to work in a different way would help them deliver better for the community.

But, so far, local areas have found it challenging to think of new ideas about things they could do differently – and when they have made requests to central government departments for enabling measures, these have seldom been agreed.

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There are many opportunities for scrutiny to help partnerships identify obstacles and encourage LSPs to be ambitious when they ask for enabling measures. There is also, potentially, an important political role for councillors to put pressure on Whitehall to agree to reasonable requests.

### **management of local priorities**

Local areas are expected to deliver the targets in the LAA and serious under-performance can lead to interventions such as the withdrawal of funding streams. This means that there is a challenge for local areas:

- do they focus on including local targets to ensure the LAA is a local as well as a national document – and risk being penalised for being ambitious?  
or
- do they restrict the local elements of the LAA – and risk having partners only focus on delivering national priorities?

Scrutiny may have an important role in monitoring these risks and opportunities and encouraging the LSP to discuss this issue with the Government Office.

## **legal powers that underpin partnership scrutiny**

This information relates to England.

### **general legal framework for scrutiny**

The requirement for councils to adopt a constitution with an executive/scrutiny split was brought in by the **Local Government Act 2000**. There must be one or more overview and scrutiny committees of councillors who are not on the executive. There is a wide range of options as to how this is organised, including permanent committees and panels set up to carry out a particular piece of work over a few months or more (Dungey, 2001).

The range of activities in which overview and scrutiny may be involved includes: regular performance reports and questioning of executive and senior staff, work to contribute to the council's future policies and budgets, and select committee style enquiries into particular topics.

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The Local Government Act 2000 includes requirements for the organisation of scrutiny and these are set out in Part 2, Section 21 of the Act. As well as scrutiny of the council's executive, the Act says scrutiny arrangements should include the power to report 'on matters which affect the authority's area or the inhabitants of that area.' However, when the Act was passed, it required only members of the council executive and staff to respond to scrutiny activities. Scrutiny bodies could invite but not compel others to attend (see changes to this below).

The **Local Government Act 2003** allows authorities to grant voting rights to scrutiny committee co-optees who are not councillors. This is in addition to co-opted school governors and diocesan representatives co-opted with voting rights onto education scrutiny committees. In other cases, co-opted members will be non-voting unless the council introduces a co-option scheme under the Act.

The **Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Bill 2006**, develops the legal framework by creating a clear requirement on the executive to respond to scrutiny recommendations.

### scrutiny of health

Councils in England have specific rights to scrutinise health issues including the National Health Service. For England only, the Local Government Act 2000 has been amended by the **Health and Social Care Act 2011**, which sets out the health scrutiny role. There are regulations and guidance that develop the role of scrutiny in relation to health and NHS services, issued under the Health and Social Care Act 2011.

The Housing and Social Care Act 2011 includes provision for representatives of local NHS bodies to be required to attend and provide information to council scrutiny bodies. There is a particular role in commenting to the Secretary of State for Health on major proposed changes to NHS provision in the area. Scrutiny of other health improvement issues as well as comment on NHS matters is encouraged.

This right is held by social services authorities and in two tier areas there is generally a county level health scrutiny committee with co-optees from the districts.

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**scrutiny of crime and disorder issues**

The **Police and Justice Act 2006** contains new powers on scrutiny of police, crime and disorder issues, which are likely to be implemented from 2008. A right to scrutinise Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships is given, and regulations will detail issues such as rights of access to information, requirements to attend the committee, and co-option. Those involved in Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 are police and police authorities, councils, PCTs, and fire authorities.

The Act also introduces the Community Call for Action, which in two-tier areas would be exercised by district councillors. Members of the public or community groups can raise persistent problems of anti-social behaviour with their ward councillor and, if there is no action, with the council's executive.

The ward councillor will be able to decide what to do about the issue, with the option of referring it to a scrutiny committee. The scrutiny committee would be able to investigate, report and require a response from the agencies concerned.

**scrutiny of Local Area Agreements**

The **Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Bill 2006**, if it becomes law, will add to scrutiny powers. The Bill sets out statutory requirements for Local Area Agreements:

- a duty of named organisations to co-operate with LAAs
- a duty on these organisations to respond to scrutiny in relation to targets of the LAA with which they are involved including responsibilities on partner organisations to provide information in response to scrutiny requests, and to have regard to scrutiny recommendations.

# partnership scrutiny

## in practice

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This section looks at what scrutiny of Local Strategic Partnerships aims to achieve. It covers a range of different roles scrutiny can play in relation to LSPs and related partnerships, and gives examples of what some councils have done.

### roles partner organisations may play in scrutiny

Whether or not the organisation is subject to a legal duty to respond to scrutiny, members of LSPs from outside the council may become involved in scrutiny. This could be as:

- **a subject of scrutiny:** a local service external to the council may be the subject of a local scrutiny enquiry, covering its plans and/or performance in general, or a particular topic. The enquiry could be a one-off question and answer session, or involvement in a more substantial enquiry over a longer period.
- **a witness:** scrutiny enquiries often work like parliamentary select committees (but probably rather more informally), gathering evidence over a series of hearings. Witnesses from partner organisations, or other experts, could be invited to give a presentation and answer questions, and be asked for written information or to answer survey questions. Partner organisations could also be asked to take part in other forms of evidence gathering such as user consultation.

- **an expert adviser:** some scrutiny enquiries appoint an expert adviser to the whole project, again, following the model of parliamentary select committees.
- **a co-optee:** scrutiny panels and committees can co-opt members who are not councillors, either temporarily or permanently.

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### effective outcomes from scrutiny

It is essential that scrutiny work is based on a sense of what it is intended to achieve and how it plans to be influential. Positive achievements from scrutiny of partnerships can be divided into:

#### improving what the partnership does

- ways to improve the achievements of the partnership and solve any performance problems are devised and put into action
- through an open process of investigation and dialogue, the partners find new ways to tackle local problems
- there is a wider influence of ward councillors and local people on the content of the main strategies, such as the community strategy, making them better reflect what communities want.

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**improving how the partnership works**

- members understand the council's partnership arrangements better
- recommendations are made and implemented to make the LSP work more effectively
- the scrutiny role supports wider community and user dialogue with partnerships, improving community engagement with vital local services and issues
- recommendations are made and implemented to improve the LSP's communication and openness.

**adding value from the role of scrutiny**

Partnership working is intended to tackle the fragmentation and lack of local accountability which has been created in the public arena. One of the problems is the complexity of partnership arrangements. A second problem is the multiple accountabilities of many public services, which are subject to inspection and auditors with many targets and reporting requirements, national government intervention, and regional government offices.

It is vital that councillors recognise the complexity of the scrutiny map in relation to partnerships, and find ways in which scrutiny can genuinely add value. The particular characteristics of scrutiny should be built on in identifying its role. These include linkage with the democratic role of the council, local knowledge, links with wider strategies and partnerships, openness, scope for community and user involvement. The work of other agencies such as inspectorates can be used as information by overview and scrutiny committees but should not be duplicated.



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## roles of overview and scrutiny

Generally, the roles overview and scrutiny can be defined as

- holding to account
- performance management
- policy development
- policy review

These roles are discussed specifically in the following sections in relation to the scrutiny of LSPs.

## scrutiny role: holding to account

This scrutiny role in relation to LSPs includes:

- providing challenge: for example the 'call to action' in the Police and Justice Act enables scrutiny to take up issues raised by the public
- putting community leadership into practice as a democratic body: many local services are not under democratic control and scrutiny can make a contribution to filling the democratic deficit
- creating greater openness from partnerships: scrutiny investigations can bring information into the public domain and can identify the need for greater communication from partnerships.
- working in ways that create greater accountability to communities and users, for example through co-option or consultation.
- ensuring partnership structures are open and fit for purpose (governance issues), for example how they relate to local democratic structures and whether different sectors are adequately represented.

## CASE STUDY NOTTINGHAM

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### how the city council could better support the LSP

In 2004, the Nottingham LSP had been having problems. The board suspended itself and a fresh start process commenced. One of the overview and scrutiny committees had started a review of partnership work and it prioritised looking at how the city council could better support the LSP. The members wanted to identify how scrutiny could make a positive contribution to improvement. This included looking at how it could improve the involvement of various stakeholders including the voluntary sector. Witnesses with whom this was discussed included the Nottingham Council for Voluntary Service, a representative from the Liverpool LSP, the leader of the council, the deputy chief executive, and a representative from the Government Office for the East Midlands.

Recommendations were made on strengthening the council's role, clearer communication from the LSP, improved definition of the priorities of the partnership, and performance management. After a positive response to the report from the leader of the council, the report went to the new LSP board, which has agreed to take forward many of the recommendations. The work helped councillors to understand the LSP better and helped the council see where to target resources.

## CASE STUDY SOUTHWARK

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### enhancing the accountability of the LSP

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The London Borough of Southwark's overview and scrutiny committee carried out a review of the working of its LSP, during 2004–5. This stemmed from the concerns of members about openness, and about links with neighbourhood work, where ward councillors did not feel sufficiently involved in decision-making. Hearings included the Government Office for London (involved in performance management for the NRF), consultants, staff and ward councillors. The committee's recommendations focused on three themes:

- the accountability and performance management arrangements for the Southwark Alliance
- communications with the council and ward councillors
- Southwark Alliance's links with the democratic infrastructure of the council including its community councils.

Among the suggestions for improving accountability and scrutiny suggested by the council's consultants, Shared Intelligence, were:

- an annual or biannual accountability session on the LSP with the leader of the council and other board members answering questions from scrutiny members
- scrutiny enquiries into specific subjects, for example investigating particular performance problems
- scrutiny enquiries into overall achievements in specific priority neighbourhoods
- scrutiny of the achievements in realising the community strategy
- scrutiny of the LAA.

Although Southwark Alliance did not accept all the recommendations, it was interested in pursuing the possibility of scrutiny investigations into particular areas of underachievement, to utilise an investigative capacity it did not otherwise have.

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### scrutiny role: performance management

This scrutiny role in relation to LSPs includes:

- reviewing the performance management arrangements of the LSP to ensure they are robust and effective
- a review of the implementation of the community strategy and sub-strategies such as crime and disorder education
- scrutiny of the past and current performance of partnerships, including performance failures
- scrutiny of the implementation of LAAs including investigating under performance
- a review of the use of resources by partnerships
- scrutiny of the council's contribution to the implementation of wider partnership work
- performance at a neighbourhood level.

### scrutiny of the Local Area Agreement

The role of overview and scrutiny in relation to the Local Area Agreement covers:

- development: deciding what councillors want the LAA to achieve locally and how this can be linked to national priorities and mandatory outcomes, pushing for greater local freedom through 'enabling' measures.
- performance: looking at how well the LAA is being implemented and reaching its goals, identifying what is going well and what is going wrong and how things can be improved.
- review: the LAA has to be reviewed and refreshed annually to reflect changes such as new funding streams or improvements to mandatory performance indicators. This is also an opportunity for issues identified by scrutiny to be fed into the LAA process.

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### developing the LAA

Alongside the community strategy, the LAA is fundamental to what the council and its partners want to achieve locally. Scrutiny meetings have been used in the development of LAAs to keep members informed of the process and to contribute views. However, all councillors need to be able to engage with the LAA and scrutiny meetings should not be the only opportunity. All members of the council should have the opportunity to attend information and training sessions, workshops, and debates by the whole council, to help them engage with LAAs. For example, in **Birmingham**, even though the timetable for LAA development was very tight, there was a meeting for all councillors to discuss the draft LAA. As well as a city-wide LAA, Birmingham also has four pilot district-level LAAs and councillors have also been engaged at this level. Voluntary and community involvement is also important for LAAs, and councillors may want to engage with their discussions.

### structures for scrutiny of LAAs

Some councils have changed their scrutiny arrangements to bring them more into line with the four blocks of the LAA. For example, in **Doncaster** the scrutiny panels have been changed to cover the four blocks although there also has to be inclusion of other council services and some adaptation. Partner organisations as well as the council are involved and they are usually pleased to have the opportunity to raise issues in a public forum.

In two tier areas there is a county-wide LAA involving the county council, all the districts and other partners. This makes scrutiny arrangements complex.

**Cornwall** reviewed its options and decided to set up a new multi-organisation scrutiny committee for the LAA. This consists of the chairs and vice chairs of their five scrutiny committees and one member from each of the six district councils. Three more members were co-opted from health and the police.

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**performance management of LAAs**

LSPs are expected to have a performance management and financial accountability framework, agreed by the government office for the region, to monitor and manage the LAA. The council is defined as the 'accountable body' and must give the government office performance information on the whole LAA twice a year.

The scrutiny role in this process is a matter for local choice. There are productive ways in which scrutiny can strengthen the basic performance monitoring requirements for the Government Office. As part of the performance management framework, LSPs will need to demonstrate that they have:

- regular, robust and frequent processes to identify whether performance is succeeding, failing or travelling in the right direction
- clarity about who is responsible for each specific target
- a local 'ladder of intervention' – a method to escalate issues when under performance is identified
- mechanisms for identifying and addressing under performance.

A system that meets these requirements will be accessible for scrutiny and present many opportunities for scrutiny to play an important role. Overview and scrutiny committees can maximise their effectiveness by ensuring the design of the performance management and financial accountability framework explicitly includes a strong role for scrutiny. This will need to be agreed with the council and the LSP.

**what scrutiny could do**

The scrutiny committee(s) could lead the local performance management of the LAA. It could receive regular performance reports on LAA targets, perhaps with a simple set of 'traffic light' indicators as to which services were meeting the goals in a satisfactory way.

This could be backed up with more detailed investigation into problem areas that would unpick underlying reasons and propose solutions. These would be evidence-based and would draw on current good practice in scrutiny such as:

- co-option
- evidence gathering
- hearing witnesses
- imaginative community engagement and consultation
- visits and informal investigations on the ground.

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All the bodies signed up to the LAA could take part as could user groups and other local people. This open process would encourage public and media engagement with partnership work and local problems.

Currently, not all public service organisations are legally obliged to be accountable to council scrutiny, although they could take part voluntarily. However, this is likely to change if the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Bill becomes law. Various named public agencies will be given a duty to co-operate in developing the LAA. Other LSP partners, the voluntary, community and private sectors, would only be involved on a voluntary basis, as at present.

### **scrutiny role: policy development and review**

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This scrutiny role in relation to LSPs includes:

- input into the development of the community strategy and related partnership strategies
- in-depth investigations of topics to contribute to partnership work
- ward or neighbourhood level input to policy review and development
- proposing changes in policy to tackle problems and poor achievement in specific areas of partnership work
- reviewing partnership work from a specific perspective such as sustainability
- the review of particular pieces of partnership work.

Strategy development is an area of overview and scrutiny that may need greater attention. There should be opportunities for all members to be involved in the development of the community strategy and other linked strategies such as health, crime and disorder, or children's services. The input of overview and scrutiny committees can be an important contribution to strategy development.

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### examples of thematic reviews involving partners

- in the London Borough of **Southwark**, scrutiny is involved in a project for the children and young people partnership, tracking young people's experience of regeneration schemes.
- a joint scrutiny review on drugs, alcohol and substance abuse, carried out jointly by **Rugby** Borough Council and **Warwickshire** County Council led to recommendations for action by a range of partners. The review took place after county discussions with the PCT suggested there were particular treatment problems for drug users in Rugby. The borough was positive about the proposals and a joint review between the borough, the county and health partners meant an integrated range of solutions could be considered, covering offending, treatment, rehousing, and other services. Outcomes included better communication and joint working between probation, social services and housing. The review's effectiveness has led to proposals for a similar approach in another part of the county.
- the London Borough of **Harlow** decided on a scrutiny investigation into the fear of crime, as public opinion findings were not in line with the level of crime in the borough. Members of the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) were engaged from the beginning.

One aspect of the evidence gathering was a community conference, with a panel of experts from the local police, the Metropolitan Police Authority and the council, where residents were able to flag up issues of concern. The recommendations were all endorsed by the CDRP and the success of this initial experience of partnership work through scrutiny led to the borough commander suggesting a scrutiny review on anti-social behaviour.

- in **Doncaster**, the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel investigated childhood obesity. The review engaged a wide variety of partner organisations from the beginning, with an initial expert presentation being attended by 34 people from local organisations. Evidence was also gathered from a survey of local schools and the draft review and recommendations were discussed at a seminar led by local MP Jeff Ennis. Eighty people took part. The scrutiny recommendations were endorsed by the council executive before being received by the Primary Care Trust. The engagement of partner organisations from an early stage helped gain a positive response to the work from the PCT. The review has provided information to support other local organisations in tackling this threat to public health.



## CASE STUDY BIRMINGHAM

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### developing a relationship with the LSP

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Councillors in Birmingham set up a task and finish scrutiny group to look at the Birmingham Strategic Partnership (BSP), and investigate its role and its relationship to democratic decision-making. Birmingham City Council has a structure with devolution to district level, with partnership bodies at this more local level. Ward councillors were concerned about the decision-making role of the BSP and its thematic sub-groups, particularly in relation to the use of neighbourhood Renewal Funds. The scrutiny review led to recommendations on the role and membership of the LSP, communication, openness, and accountability. Generally, these recommendations have been implemented in a positive way; BSP meetings are now open to the public, with papers on a website, and a governance handbook sets out a code of conduct and arrangements for disputes resolution among other matters.

The relationship between the BSP and council scrutiny is now developing positively. The chair and head of scrutiny presented their work programme to the BSP and reciprocally the BSP chair talked to the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee. A scrutiny review of the LAA will take this forward. In relation to BSP, scrutiny has chosen to focus on big trends for the city and areas where performance is not on track. Detailed performance management of the LAA is the responsibility of an LSP board sub-group.

# the future for partnership scrutiny

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This section looks at aspects of the scrutiny of Local Strategic Partnerships which are likely to be important in the future. These include:

- responding to the higher profile of partnership work
- linking neighbourhood and community engagement with the work of the LSP
- learning the lessons of health scrutiny and feeding them into the new statutory framework
- ensuring that member support within the council contributes to partnership scrutiny success.

## the increasing importance of Local Strategic Partnerships

The increasing profile of the role of LSPs brings new opportunities for scrutiny, but also a need to work at a higher level, and to ensure the council has a cohesive and well thought out approach to the management of scrutiny and partnership. New legal duties from the Police and Justice Act, and the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Bill, build on the increasingly high profile health scrutiny role.

The next phase of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) will also give greater emphasis to area based assessment and the council's role as the leader of strategic partnership work.

Councils will increasingly be involved in issues such as sustainability or tackling demographic change, which require work across institutional boundaries. It is vital that councils plan a more influential role for scrutiny which makes a real difference to this work.

## neighbourhoods and partnership scrutiny

Neighbourhood level working – and community involvement more generally – is of increasing importance. It is emphasised in the 2006 Local Government White Paper, *Strong and Prosperous Communities*. Some LSPs, particularly those with a big emphasis on regeneration and neighbourhood renewal, have been heavily engaged in neighbourhood level work. There may be links from the LSP to:

- neighbourhood or area-based arrangements covering the whole council area
- particular partnership arrangements in some neighbourhoods, for example those which have received New Deal for Communities or Single Regeneration Budget funding.

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The impact of services on particularly disadvantaged neighbourhoods may be of particular importance to the LSP in achieving its targets.

There is a range of ways in which links can be made between LSP scrutiny, and the neighbourhood:

- the new Community Call for Action in the Police and Justice Act and likely to be developed from the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Bill
- the use of area or neighbourhood forums for scrutiny evidence gathering such as neighbourhood based hearings and consultation
- using the knowledge of ward councillors more systematically
- developing performance information at a very local level
- carrying out neighbourhood scrutiny enquiries
- scrutiny investigation of the distribution of funding in an area and the impact of existing services.

### **community involvement and scrutiny**

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There are many ways in which community involvement in scrutiny can be developed

- a comprehensive community involvement strategy should underpin the development and revision of the community strategy and the local development framework. Scrutiny could contribute to the development of this strategy or review what is proposed.
- overview and scrutiny committee work can be a focus for community involvement, hearing witnesses from local organisations, organising consultation events, and commissioning public opinion surveys
- scrutiny investigation could look at how well community members and organisations are involved in the LSP, both within its structures and through initiatives such as community conferences.

## CASE STUDY TOWER HAMLETS

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### the role of ward councillors in the LSP

In 2005/6, a scrutiny working group in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets carried out a review on the role of ward councillors in the Tower Hamlets Partnership. There had been concern about the relationship of ward-based and area arrangements and how they related to the work of the wider Tower Hamlets Partnership. Some councillors felt marginalised. There was also concern that some of the partner organisations did not understand the role of councillors. The review carried out a survey of all councillors and members of the partnership about the role of councillors in the LSP.

Among the recommendations the review supported:

- the development of a job description for councillors as community leaders and enhancement of the support provided for this role
- learning and development activities, including induction, for members, to focus more on this role and on understanding the partnership
- ward based performance data
- scrutiny chairs participating in community plan action groups
- the creation of improved links between councillors and area directors co-ordinating neighbourhood management
- identifying how partners can use the experience of councillors, especially in communicating with local residents including harder to reach groups

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## developing a new legal framework for partnership scrutiny

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As mentioned earlier, the Police and Justice Act 2006 and the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Bill provide a new legal framework for partnership scrutiny. The main precedent for this is scrutiny of health and health services and we now have several years' experience of this. The 'Lessons from health scrutiny' panel suggests what has been learnt from this work.

Evaluation of the first years of scrutiny of health services has been carried out by Manchester University (Bradshaw et al, 2006). Related research by Anna Coleman on health scrutiny (Coleman, 2006) suggests that two of the aims of this power were: to increase the democratic accountability of NHS services locally through 'scrutiny as democracy' and to help joint work between the council and other services through 'scrutiny as integration'. In the early years, the main area of success was this identification of better ways to work jointly in tackling problems.

## LESSONS FROM HEALTH SCRUTINY

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- **agree how you are going to work.** From the outset, liaise with external services and partner organisations that may be subject to scrutiny. Create a protocol or code of conduct agreeing mutual roles and practical arrangements about how you are going to work. Meet partners regularly to identify future issues and review how work is progressing.
- **create positive expectations.** Good, early reviews engage a range of services including the council; on subjects seen as useful and positive by the agencies under scrutiny; are contained and manageable in scale; and are on topics where there is a consensus that 'things need to change'. Use scrutiny to build effective partnerships.
- **develop skills and understanding.** Joint training and development will help you learn about the culture and assumptions of different organisations. Don't just do this at the beginning. Members need basic knowledge about structures and responsibilities of service under scrutiny but don't let them be intimidated by professionals or jargon.
- **scrutiny must be member led.** Identify issues they think are important and ensure organisations under scrutiny understand the democratic role of members as community leaders.
- **plan and prioritise your work programme.** Ensure scrutiny does what only scrutiny can do – use its unique characteristics: democratic engagement, partnership building, local priorities and place-building. Don't duplicate inspectorates and regulators. Ensure reviews have very clear objectives. Be realistic – better to do a limited number of reviews in depth and well. Don't let national priorities squeeze out local issues – you don't have to take part in national consultations if it is not a local priority.
- **community and user involvement is vital.** Ensure information provided for elected members and the community is easily understood by lay people. Allow time and resources for consultation, and use your imagination about how to do it. Use existing resources and organisations to consult in addition to new initiatives such as surveys. Let people know how their involvement contributed to the review findings and subsequent changes.
- **ensure scrutiny makes a difference.** Ensure reviews are evidence based and engage with influential people and organisations. Develop clear, timely, targeted recommendations, linked to evidence and public opinion, that are challenging but achievable. Allow scrutinised organisations to check your facts before publication.
- **manage communications.** Build positive links with the local media and help them understand the purpose of scrutiny. Use them to engage the public. Agree joint press releases if possible and agree who will deal with the media
- **evaluate and learn from your experience.** Monitor the response to recommendations. Review your projects and work programme to see what could be improved and engage those being scrutinised in this.

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### supporting the scrutiny of LSPs

At present, most but not all councils have scrutiny support teams. Other forms of support include research budgets, use of independent advisors, use of co-option from community organisations and others, secondment from council departments, and scrutiny networks for members and scrutiny officers. The development of partnership scrutiny calls for a reassessment of the support given.

The Community Call for Action raises issues about the support the council gives to ward councillors to help them deal with matters and problems in their wards. Those raised as a Community Call for Action should where possible be solved before needing to be referred to a scrutiny meeting – this should be a last resort for major or persistent problems.

New legal powers for partnership scrutiny will also require support. As well as direct support from scrutiny teams, there will need to be closer working between staff supporting partnership work, and staff supporting scrutiny. Communications between councillors involved in LSPs, particularly in a leadership role and councillors involved in scrutiny is also vital. The evidence is that partnership work can be enhanced by scrutiny, but communication and liaison is vital to ensure this happens.

Scrutiny of strategic partnerships presents a chance to develop the role and raise the profile of scrutiny. The council and its senior management have a responsibility to ensure this development is supported and achieves its potential.

# further information, reading and acknowledgements

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- Leach, Steve and others, (2003) *Strengthening Local Democracy – Making the most of the constitution*, ODPM.

## websites

- Centre for Public Scrutiny website has extensive resources for scrutiny: publications, events, a library of review reports, a discussion forum: [www.cfps.org.uk](http://www.cfps.org.uk)
- Department for Communities and Local Government website includes research reports on scrutiny, under Local and Regional Government Research: [www.odpm.gov.uk](http://www.odpm.gov.uk)
- The Improvement and Development Agency website has extensive resources for local government: [www.idea-knowledge.gov.uk](http://www.idea-knowledge.gov.uk)
- The Local Government Information Unit website gives information on publications and other scrutiny work: [www.lgiu.gov.uk](http://www.lgiu.gov.uk)

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*The LSP Peer Challenge Partnership*

Peer Challenge  
of the  
**Chorley Local Strategic  
Partnership**

**November 6/7<sup>th</sup>, 2007**

*The LSP Peer Challenge Partnership*

## **1. Executive Summary**

- 1.1 The Chorley LSP is very new in its current form. Although there has been a history of partnerships in Chorley for some years, it is only within the last year or so that the current partnership can really be said to have been operating and, even within this time, there have been further changes to structures and roles.
- 1.2 The Council has driven the establishment of the current partnership and is continuing to provide considerable support through dedicated staff and finance for projects. While, without exception, partners are positive about the council's commitment and recognise its community leadership role, they also report that it is sometimes difficult to distinguish the partnership from the council.
- 1.3 The new Chorley Partnership has come a long way in a relatively short space of time. It has achieved a great deal in terms of building the infrastructure of the partnership and forming personal relationships which are making a significant impact on the way business is done in the Borough. Much remains to be done to ensure that the partnership matures and is able to produce concrete achievements which are recognised by local people as having made a real difference to their lives. However, there seems no reason to doubt that this is perfectly possible provided the current focus and direction is maintained.

## **2. Background**

- 2.1 The LSP Peer Challenge Methodology has been developed and is offered through a partnership between SOLACE Enterprises Ltd, Warwick University Business School and the IDeA.
- 2.2 The aims of peer challenge are to:
  - Provide an objective, robust and managed external challenge to an LSP's own assessment of its current performance;
  - Encourage thinking about strengths and areas for improvement;
  - Contribute to producing a strong and forward looking improvement plan.
- 2.3 This model of peer challenge involves a team of five people making an assessment over a period of two days. The team comprises a facilitator from one of the three provider organisations, a Chief Executive and an elected member from other local authorities and two

members who represent other public, private or voluntary sector partner organisations

- 2.4 Principles on which the approach is based include:
- Using credible associates and peers who understand the working of the relevant type of LSP;
  - Peers who are independent from and acceptable to the LSP;
  - A peer challenge structured around the specially developed LSP Benchmark;
  - Written and verbal feedback provided to the LSP by the team.
- 2.5 The purpose of the model of peer challenge is to help the LSP to ensure that its own assessment is as accurate a reflection of its current performance, achievements and future capacity as it possibly can be and to give pointers towards future development needs.
- 2.6 The Benchmark which provides the framework for the assessment covers the following four areas and these are used to structure the feedback in this report:
- Achievements and Impact
  - Vision and Strategy
  - Leadership and Relationships
  - Governance and Performance

### **3 The Chorley LSP peer challenge process**

- 3.1 The peer challenge of the Chorley LSP began prior to the on-site period with a review of key documents provided on C-D Rom together with a self assessment covering the areas of the LSP Benchmark.
- 3.2 The challenge team was:
- Andrew North, Chief Executive Cheltenham Borough Council
  - Cllr James Hakewell, Leader Kettering Borough Council
  - Kim Harper, Chief Executive Derby CVS
  - Kevin Lambert, Chief Superintendent Northumbria Police
  - Patricia Coleman, SOLACE Enterprises Facilitator
- 3.3 The evening prior to the visit the team met to make final preparations for the peer challenge. The team discussed their views on the background information provided by the LSP, agreed the lines of enquiry to be pursued during the visit and additional activities and documentation which might be needed to gather information.
- 3.4 The various methods that the team used to gather information included:

- Face to face and telephone interviews with a cross section of stakeholders
  - Focus group discussions
  - Additional document reviews
- 3.5 At the end of each day the team reflected back to the Council, on behalf of the LSP, what they thought they were seeing and learning which provided an opportunity to steer the team to look at additional information if necessary.
- 3.6 The results of the process outlined above are set out in the remainder of this report. In making its comments the team sought to add value by concentrating on those areas where, as peers, they were able to contribute most to the further development of the LSP.
- 3.7 While the team took care to note areas of strengths as well as areas for improvement, since the main aim of the challenge process is to stimulate improvement, comparatively more attention has been given in this report to explaining and evidencing the areas on which the team believes the LSP should focus its attention in the future.

## 4 Headlines

The Team's overall assessment of the LSP was of:

**"A sea change from a low base, going in the right direction, high ambitions and expectations, still early days but now poised to deliver real change"**

### **Positives:**

- The new Partnership is actively developing its infrastructure, key strategies, plans and processes and has established a number of significant cross-cutting projects
- This is a Partnership that is keen to learn, is aiming to be inclusive and is ambitious for Chorley
- The new Chief Executive and Council Leader, who are determined that the Borough achieves, have brought focus
- Partners seem to trust each other
- There is positive engagement by key partners e.g. Police and PCT
- The private sector is making a significant contribution
- The Voluntary, Community & Faith sector is feeling positive and wanting to be accountable

- The LSP is now better placed to engage with the next LAA and ensure the Borough's priorities are addressed

### **Issues to Consider:**

- It is time to start consolidating and investing in the Partnership's capacity
- Partnership working involves compromise and "letting go" without losing focus – all partners should ensure that they retain sensitivity to the needs of different sectors so some don't get left behind
- Partners need to take responsibility for being proactive and not wait for the council to always take the lead
- Do more to check back with Partners and the Community about proposals
- Who owns the Chorley brand? How far have other Partners adopted it?
- Other roles for the LSP may include:
  - Lobbying on behalf of the Borough (e.g. to government)
  - Promoting the Borough's successes beyond the immediate area
  - Celebrating successes of partners, individually as well as collectively

These headline points constitute the feedback given to the Chief Executive of the council at the end of the visit. They are developed further in the main body of this report.

## **5 Achievements and Impact**

### **Strengths**

- 5.1 Partnership working has considerable history in Chorley dating back, according to some, to 1996. During recent years some specific partnerships e.g. Community Safety, have been very active and have achieved practical outcomes but the overall partnership or LSP did not have a good reputation for action and was considered to be largely "a talking shop".

- 5.2 The inception of the current LSP dates from around the time of the arrival of the Borough Council's Chief Executive and the new administration about 18 months ago. The impact of the new Leader's and Chief Executive's desire to see the Borough succeed is regarded by most partners and stakeholders as the reason for the drive and energy which now exists in the partnership. The LSP is now seen as a reliable performer by the Government Office.
- 5.3 Given the newness of the current LSP it would be unrealistic to expect much in the way of practical outcomes. Some practical achievements claimed by the LSP e.g. reduction in crime, increase in employment, reduction in infant mortality, are either the result of work through specific partnerships or the efforts of individual agencies including the council.
- 5.4 However, in the past year the partners in the LSP have worked hard to build a new infrastructure and membership. Six themed sub- groups have been established and through the provision of £85,000 of funding from the council which has levered in further funding from partners, each group has either established or is working to establish a cross-cutting project through which to deliver the priorities identified in the Sustainable Community Strategy. The injection of funding, which has now been committed by the council for subsequent years, has had a substantial impact in unblocking barriers to partnership working. In addition, the council has appointed a full time officer to support the LSP and all of the council's senior managers are fully on board with the partnership agenda.
- 5.5 The LSP is now poised to deliver practical achievements through the on-going work of specific partnerships it has subsumed e.g. The Multi-Agency Tasking and Coordinating Project within the Community Safety theme and the new projects which are being established e.g. Vulnerable Households. The projects are proving to be extremely useful in developing relationships between partners, a culture of partnership working and practical approaches.
- 5.6 The existence of a strong LSP now means that there is much greater ability than previously to input to the development of the new LAA and to ensure that it incorporates the Chorley Partnership's priorities.

### **Areas for Development**

- 5.7 The LSP does not receive Neighbourhood Renewal Funding nor other external grants which would make it easier to support partnership activity. Therefore it will be essential to begin, as soon as possible, to work towards aligning mainstream budgets to focus on priorities, joining up between services and, where appropriate, to pool



budgets. If the LSP simply continues to work through a limited number of projects its impact will, inevitably, be limited. Other partners have indicated a willingness to contribute, alongside the council, to the support costs of the LSP, especially in specific areas e.g. consultation. This should be encouraged in order that the LSP is seen genuinely to be a partnership.

- 5.8 Partners should build on existing experiences e.g. the joint Community Safety Team and consider opportunities to locate and commission services jointly wherever this makes sense. For example, there would appear to be considerable scope to re-assess the various information and advice outlets within Chorley Town Centre and to co-locate these in a single building e.g. the Borough Council's Customer Contact Centre, under a Chorley Partnership branding. This would also be extremely helpful in giving the partnership a profile with local people.

## **6 Vision and Strategy**

### **Strengths**

- 6.1 The LSP has recently produced a Sustainable Community Strategy. This has built on the previous strategy developed in 2005. The strategy contains a clear vision which has been agreed by the partners as being distinctive to Chorley and reflecting the Borough's urban / rural mix. A new set of five priorities have been developed and targets have been streamlined and made SMARTer.
- 6.2 The existence of this strategy will enable alignment of the Borough's Sustainable Community Strategy with that of the county-wide partnership –Ambition Lancashire - and the Local Area Agreement, both of which are currently being re-freshed.
- 6.3 The 2005 strategy was developed through extensive consultation. For well thought through reasons, this time there was more limited consultation through partner networks. The Voluntary, Community and Faith sector in particular were involved in this through the "Stronger and More Involved" sub-group.
- 6.4 Further strategies are currently being developed which will produce added value to the partnership, including a draft Community Cohesion Strategy currently out to consultation and a Climate Change Strategy.
- 6.5 Other important areas identified as priorities include affordable housing and health inequalities.

### **Areas for Development**

- 6.6 The SCS was prepared quite hurriedly in order to feed into the county-wide processes for developing the SCS and LAA. It would be helpful now to begin checking out with partners the implications of the partnership strategy for their own strategies and operational plans.
- 6.7 Similarly, some of the priorities do not have unquestioned sign up. For example, although teenage pregnancies are an issue county-wide, there is not perceived, by some, to be a particular problem in Chorley in comparison with other aspects of health e.g. alcohol consumption and the health and social care needs of the growing number of elderly people. The LSP needs to ensure that there is sufficient space for full discussion about specific priorities for the future.
- 6.8 The boundaries of the Borough are not coterminous with those of a number of key partners e.g. Police and PCT. Whilst both these agencies are currently strong supporters of the LSP some representatives suggested that these organisations may not have the capacity in the longer term to support districts at both a strategic and an operational level. It may be necessary at some point in the future to consider a move towards a Central Lancashire LSP (also covering the boroughs of Preston and South Ribble) and, to this end, the CP should welcome and support sub-regional strategies e.g. for Health and Well-being. This would build on current strategic developments across the sub-region e.g. the Local Development Framework.

## **7 Leadership and Relationships**

### **Strengths**

- 7.1 Although it is still early days, there is undoubtedly trust between most partners. The partnership is seen as inclusive and engagement by all sectors is strong. There is a sense of common purpose and commitment by all to the LSP's overarching strategic objectives.
- 7.2 Relationships between the leaders of the LSP are strong outside of meetings. A lot of business is done through these informal networks e.g. the establishment of Applejax Nightclub for 12-16 year olds. These positive inter-personal relationships are a major factor in motivating the LSP.
- 7.3 Engagement by the private sector is stronger than in many LSPs. Key individuals within the private sector are injecting an inspirational and dynamic vision of future economic development within the area based

on clear recognition of its potential as a location for national and multi-national businesses.

- 7.4 There is now an energy and commitment to the partnership from the Voluntary, Community and Faith sector (VCF) sector. This follows a somewhat difficult period of readjustment to the new LSP structure and arrangements to identify membership from the sector through elections, which not all were happy about. The main platform for the VCF is through the Stronger and More Involved Sub-group but individuals from the sector as also influential in other forums of the LSP. The VCF are, therefore, engaged and want to be fully accountable along with other partners.
- 7.5 In recent months a decision has been implemented to incorporate the Local Public Sector Board into the LSP executive structure in order to avoid duplication and focus the capacity of public sector partners. At this point, the Leader of the Council took over the role of chair of the LSP Executive. The LSP Board is chaired by an independent business consultant who is also has links with the VCF.
- 7.6 Other council members e.g. relevant Cabinet portfolio holders are engaged in the partnership at Executive and Board levels and within the sub-groups. Council members from both main political groups on the council are supportive of and engaged with the LSP. Consideration is currently being given to how Overview and Scrutiny members might contribute to the progress of the LSP.
- 7.7 Relationships between the Chorley LSP and the county-wide partnership –the Lancashire Partnership, are developing e.g. through the Leader’s role, as Chair of the CP, at a county and through the engagement of district level partnership officers in the development of the LAA. While the county council is seen by some members of the Partnership as the least engaged partner in the CP, the level of engagement is also much improved and in certain areas is viewed as strong. The Locality Plan developed in conjunction with the County Council is seen as a major step forward in building the relationship between the district and county council.
- 7.8 South Ribble is the closest neighbour and there is considerable cross-boundary working and shared projects. A friendly rivalry appears to exist between the two boroughs.
- 7.9 The LSP newsletter “Chorley People” is attractive and informative and is a means of keeping stakeholders in touch with the work of the partnership.

### Areas for Development

- 7.10 The council must take care to balance its legitimate role as a major player in and effective leader of the partnership, with an approach that encourages consensus and openness to other partners' views and needs. There is a danger that the council could become over-dominant and through this leave others behind. A number of partners expressed the view that it was sometimes difficult to see a distinction between the council and the partnership. This is particularly likely if key meetings are always led by the council, held in council buildings and council members and officers out-number other partners. The view was also expressed that some other partners can be marginalised even on issues where they have expertise. This was not thought to be deliberate – as the view is that there is a genuine aspiration to be inclusive. However, there is also a need for partners to be proactive and not always sit back and wait for the council to take the lead.
- 7.11 Now is the time to begin to invest in the capacity within the LSP. This includes the capacity within sectors e.g. the VCF, so they do not get left behind by the speed and focus of some other key partners e.g. the private sector. There is also a need to provide space for key partners e.g. through the Executive, to develop greater awareness about the challenges for each other's organisations and the opportunities provided through the partnership to collectively work on and support the response to these. In particular this means that space must be provided outside of formal meetings or through meetings of a different style to enable and encourage this sharing.
- 7.12 Whilst the self-assessment indicates that there is a formal Compact with the VCF in place, the final agreement is still being developed. Although not a statutory requirement for the LSP the robust development and implementation of a local Compact, championed by the Council, will provide a framework within which the relationship between the voluntary, community and statutory sectors can be further developed. The Compact is a national model for partnership working underpinned by five codes; partnerships, consultation, funding, volunteering, community groups and equal opportunities. Partnership working is a primary theme of Compacts and its principles and values need to be fully embedded. It provides conflict resolution mechanisms for partners to openly move forward on identified issues, a framework for effective interaction and sets down core principles that maximise the opportunity for co-ordinated and open interaction between partners. Often LSPs appoint Compact champions, resulting in stronger partnerships and the increased development of the local

voluntary sector. The development of a Chorley Compact implementation plan will ensure good practice in partnership working with the voluntary and community sector.

- 7.13 There is also a question remaining for some on whether, even after the process of elections, the VCF is truly representative. Some harder to reach groups may be missing and others may be over-represented.
- 7.14 The LSP has yet to establish arrangements for consulting and engaging with communities. The council operates 4 Community Forums to which partners are invited to contribute. Current discussions about a possible move towards neighbourhood management might have implications for the future of the forum structure. Any decisions about this need to be seen in the wider context of the relationship between the council and the LSP. Some partners indicated that they were comfortable with the council taking responsibility for community engagement on behalf of the LSP as part of its legitimate community leadership role. Other partners e.g. the VCF are unlikely to share this view.
- 7.14 Related to this is the issue of branding. The "Chorley" logo used by the council is very strong and attractive. With the agreement of key partners, it has the capability of being used as the brand for the place and so be used by all partners to indicate where activities are being delivered jointly through the LSP. As yet this does not appear to have been discussed.
- 7.15 In order to ensure that relationships remain positive and support good cross agency working as the partnership matures, to supplement the formal constitution, the LSP should adopt protocols including a code of behaviour and other agreements covering consultation, use of brand, information sharing etc.

## **8 Governance and Performance**

### **Strengths**

- 8.1 The LSP has established a comprehensive performance management system to connect strategic objectives and high level priorities to specific action plans and targets, although it is very new and is yet to be fully tested.
- 8.2 The council's Performance Plus information system is to be used to administer the performance management framework and all partners will be encouraged to input their performance management information into the system to enable monitoring across the partnership.

- 8.3 Verbal and/or written performance monitoring reports are presented to the LSP Executive and the LSP Board at each meeting.
- 8.4 The targets in the new SCS have been radically pruned from those in the previous strategy. As well as being far fewer in number they are also focused on the outcomes of partnership activity rather than also including what partners are committed to work on individually. They are directly related to achievement of the 6 cross-cutting projects over-seen by the theme sub-groups. It is intended that the new LAA targets should also be aligned to the performance management framework and delivery of the SCS.
- 8.5 The council's impressive Mosaic customer profiling technology and GIS mapping software enables in depth analysis at neighbourhood level and in future partners will be able to use this information to plan partnership activity.
- 8.6 There is a clear meeting structure. The Executive meets every 6 weeks. Its members include the most senior representatives of the partner organisations, the chairs of the 6 sub-groups and the Chair of the Board. In total this is estimated to be 17 people. The Board meets quarterly and has a membership of 40 – 10 from each of the three sectors – public, voluntary and private – plus 10 elected councillors – 6 representing the borough council and 4 from the county council. The sub-groups meet according to their individual work programmes.
- 8.7 The LSP is open to learning as demonstrated by its invitation to the peer challenge team to visit.

### **Areas for Development**

- 8.8 Whilst the structure of meetings is clear some partners were unsure about the distinctive roles of the different fora- Executive, Board and sub-groups - with the relationship between the Executive and the Board being a particular cause of confusion. A key issue is to establish where accountability lies and how accountabilities inter-relate. Some see the Board as having primacy and others the Executive. Role descriptions for members of the different fora would help to clarify this. There is also a need to distinguish the performance management responsibilities of Executive, Board and sub-groups. Some members of the Executive were not sure why they were present. They do not feel that the Executive is taking a sufficiently strategic approach. The role of the Executive should be to drive, support, resource and performance manage the major priorities of the partnership and it should not get too involved in the detail of projects which are within the remit of the sub-groups.

- 8.9 How agendas are arrived at is also unclear to some. The view was expressed that the Board meetings are long, that the agendas are managed by the council and items requested by others and seen as more important are crowded out. Sometimes unnecessary sparring by councillors on matters of party politics or borough /county politics is also seen to take up too much time (although others expressed the view that there had been some improvement here).
- 8.10 There was a suggestion that Executive meetings while "business-like" do not encourage contributions from and dialogue between partners. Poor or irregular attendance at Executive meetings by some partners or the regular attendance of substitutes should be viewed as a cause for concern and the reasons investigated.
- 8.11 Several issues were raised on the role of the sub-groups. The development and management of the projects is an important focus but there is a strong view that should not be to the exclusion of a more strategic focus. The Health group has tried to take a more strategic view and has therefore been slower to develop a specific project. This is a cause for concern by some others. There is an issue about whether sub-groups should have devolved responsibility for deciding on, or at least be consulted about matters which pertain to their area. Finally on this point there were a number of concerns expressed about the viability of the Children and Young People's sub-group becoming the Children's Trust from January and whether there had been adequate discussion about this with all partners.
- 8.12 There is a desire on the part of some council members who are not currently involved in the LSP to have a role. This should be resisted in terms of inclusion in the Executive or Board but welcomed more generally. However, there is a need to communicate more effectively with *all* councillors about the role and activities of the LSP so that they can become advocates for it and also use it as a means through which to engage more directly with partners at ward and neighbourhood levels.
- 8.13 Overview and Scrutiny does not yet have a specific role in relation to the LSP and this should be developed. However it should not be simply to add a further layer of performance monitoring and must be more focused e.g. to have a role in developing any improvement arrangements which result from this report or to review and produce proposals for specific areas of the LSP which need to be developed. Areas that would be very pertinent to the role of councillors include: how the LSP undertakes community engagement and how effectively the council is using its influence with the LSP.
- 8.14 The performance management framework is very new and over time will need to be further developed to ensure that the priorities and

targets for the SCS, LAA, Ambition Lancashire and individual partner organisations are fully aligned and that performance indicators are consistent. Partners seem to welcome the opportunity to contribute to the framework but some are unsure, as yet, about how to do this.

## 9 Recommendations

The LSP should:

- 9.1 Prepare and implement an Improvement Plan following consideration of this report.
- 9.2 Avoid letting the strong urge to act and continually drive forward crowd out opportunities to discuss and reflect.
- 9.3 Look at other areas where the LSP could start to add value e.g. through:
  - Lobbying on behalf of the Borough (e.g. to government)
  - Promoting the Borough's successes beyond the immediate area
  - Celebrating successes of partners, individually as well as collectively
- 9.4 Try to define and promote the added value the partnership brings. Answer the questions "are we collectively making a difference?" and "how do we know?"

**Patricia Coleman**

On behalf of the team  
November 2007





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**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY INQUIRY PROJECT OUTLINE**

<b>Review Topic:</b>	<b>Investigation by:</b>
	<b>Type:</b>

<b>Objectives:</b>	<b>Desired Outcomes:</b>
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**Terms of Reference:**

<b>Key Issues:</b>	<b>Risks:</b>
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<b>Venue(s):</b>	<b>Timescale:</b>
	<b>Start:</b>
	<b>Finish:</b>

**Information Requirements and Sources:**

**Documents/evidence:** *(what/why?)*

**Witnesses:** *(who, why?)*

**Consultation/Research:** *(what, why, who?)*

**Site Visits:** *(where, why, when?)*

**Officer Support:  
Lead Officer:**

**Committee Administrator:**

**Policy and Performance Officer:**

**Likely Budget Requirements:**

<u>Purpose</u>	<u>£</u>
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Total	_____
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**Target Body<sup>1</sup> for Findings/Recommendations**

*(Eg Executive Cabinet, Council, PCT)*