

Report of	Meeting	Date
Head of Corporate & Policy Services (Introduced by Cllr D Edgerley, Executive Member for Customers, Policy and Performance)	Executive Cabinet	30/03/06

## LANCASHIRE LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT – PROGRESS REPORT

### PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The purpose of the report is to update the Executive Cabinet on progress with the Lancashire Local Area Agreement (LAA).

### CORPORATE PRIORITIES

2. The LAA represents an agreement between Government, the Local Authority and its partners on an agenda for improvement over a three-year period. It is important that the LAA is consistent with local priorities in order that it doesn't detract from the pursuit of our Community and Corporate Strategy priorities.
3. The issue raised and recommendations made in this report involve risk considerations in the following categories:

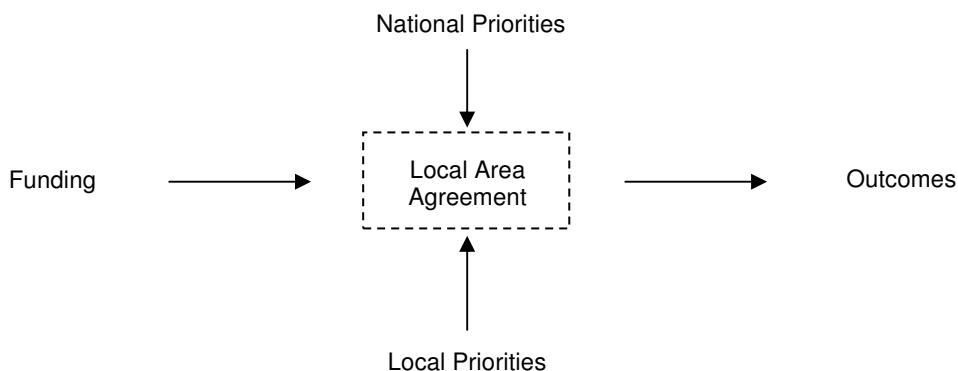
Strategy	4	Information	
Reputation	4	Regulatory/Legal	
Financial	4	Operational	4
People		Other	

4. As indicated in paragraph 2 above it is important that the LAA is consistent with our Community and Corporate Strategy priorities. Following CPA significant effort has been invested in providing greater clarity and focus locally through our Community and Corporate strategies. We do not now want to lose this focus through the imposition of targets through the LAA which are not priorities for Chorley.
5. Within the LAA 'stretch targets' will be identified which will attract Performance Reward Grant (PRG). If these targets are not achieved a reduced level of PRG will be payable.
6. As the LAA is an agreement between Government and the local authority a failure to deliver may be harmful to our reputation.
7. Once the LAA has been signed the Council will need to deliver operationally to ensure that targets are achieved.

## BACKGROUND

8. LAA's have been introduced with the aim of improving co-ordination between central government, local authorities and other key partners. The introduction of LAA's is the first step in the implementation of the Government's ten-year vision for the future of local government.
9. In simple terms the intention is that the Government will continue to set its high level strategic priorities. Together local authorities, Local Strategic Partnerships, other partners and the regional government office will then work together to identify local solutions (outcomes) which will achieve both the Government's strategic priorities and local priorities. These local solutions are then brought together in an agreement between the local area and the Government hence the title 'Local Area Agreement'.

The diagram below sets out the broad principles of the LAA.



10. The LAA is built around four priority blocks and covers a three-year period (01/04/06 – 31/03/09). The blocks are:
  - Safer and Stronger Communities
  - Children and young people
  - Economic Development and Enterprise
  - Healthier Communities and Older People.
11. As with the preceding Local Public Service Agreement twelve targets have been selected as reward targets. Each of these targets has been 'stretched' ie a higher level of performance has been estimated because of the existence of the LAA and pump priming monies. If these targets are achieved the Government will pay Performance Reward Grant. Arrangements regarding the distribution of PRG have not yet been finalised and a further report will be presented to Members in due course.
12. In two tier areas the countywide LSP, in our case the Lancashire Partnership, are required to lead preparation of, and discussions around, the LAA.
13. Work has been ongoing with the LAA for over ten months now and a number of councillors and partners have been involved in the various workshops and conferences.

## LAA UPDATE

14. The final LAA document has been signed by partners and was submitted to GONW on 17 February 2006. GONW are currently facilitating negotiations with the various government departments about the measures and targets contained within the agreement. Final sign off is expected on 17 March with the LAA due to start on 1 April 2006. The LAA will be subject to an 'annual refresh' which recognises that priorities and circumstance do not remain static over the three year period.

15. The full LAA document runs to 195 pages so copies haven't been provided with the agenda. The document can be viewed on the Lancashire Partnership website [www.lancashirepartnership.co.uk](http://www.lancashirepartnership.co.uk) or alternatively copies can be supplied on request. As a brief summary the four blocks within the LAA contain the following outcomes.

(a) **Safer and Stronger Communities Outcomes**

- To reduce crime and the harm caused by illegal drugs, and to reassure the public, reducing the fear of crime.
- To reduce overall crime in line with local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership targets and narrow the gap between the worst performing wards/neighbourhoods and other areas across the district.
- To build respect in communities and reduce anti-social behaviour.
- To improve the quality of the local environment by reducing the gap in liveability between the worst wards/neighbourhoods and the district as a whole, with particular focus on reducing levels of litter and detritus.
- To have cleaner, safer and greener public spaces in Lancashire.
- To increase the capacity of local communities so that people are empowered to participate in local decision-making and are able to influence service delivery.
- To improve the quality of life for people in the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods and ensure service providers are more responsive to neighbourhood needs and improve their service delivery.

(b) **Children and Young People Outcomes**

- Increased positive social participation by Lancashire children and young people.
- Improved health of children and young people in Lancashire.
- Improved outcomes for Lancashire's young people aged 14-19 years.
- Raise standards in English, Maths and Science in secondary education so that by 2008, in all schools located in the districts in receipt of NRF, at least 50% of pupils achieve level 5 or above in each English, Maths and Science.
- Improved outcomes for Lancashire's looked after children and young people.

(c) **Healthier Communities and Older People Outcomes**

- Reduced health inequalities across Lancashire by improving lifestyles and addressing the wider determinants of health.
- As part of an overall housing strategy for the districts, improve housing conditions within the most deprived neighbourhoods/wards, with a particular focus on ensuring that all social housing is made decent by 2010.
- Increased life expectancy at birth for Lancashire people.
- Reduce premature mortality rates and reduce inequalities in premature mortality rates between wards/neighbourhoods with a particular focus on reducing the risk factors for heart disease, stroke and related diseases (CVD) – smoking, diet and physical activity.
- Improved well-being of Lancashire's older people.
- Lancashire people with mental health problems, learning and physical disabilities and sensory impairment are more independent and have a better quality of life.

(d) **Economic Development and Enterprise Outcomes**

- Increased entrepreneurs and improved access to economic prosperity throughout Lancashire.
- For those living in the wards with the worst labour market position that are also located within the districts in receipt of NRF, significantly improve their overall employment rate and reduce the difference between their employment rate and the overall employment rate for England.

16. For each outcome a series of sub-outcomes have been identified around which measures and targets have been developed to help establish the progress being achieved.

**ACTION PLANNING**

17. As the outcomes, measures and targets have now been finalised within the LAA attention has now turned to the preparation of supporting action plans.

18. A large portion of the LAA simply lists things that will be achieved by current mainstream activities and reflects the previously planned direction of travel in terms of targets. Detailed action plans already exist in individual authority strategy's and business plans for these outcomes, measures and targets. For these areas we will monitor performance as part of our normal performance monitoring arrangements and if performance goes off track we will prepare an improvement or recovery plan to bring performance back in line.

19. The main focus for the current round of action planning will, therefore, be the reward/stretch targets.

20. Initially action plans will be prepared on a 'cluster' rather than a countrywide basis. For this purpose Chorley is clustered with South Ribble, West Lancashire and Preston. The reasoning behind this approach is that a sub-regional approach provides more opportunity for consensus over the key actions necessary to achieve the reward targets and also to consider the possibility of collaboration and partnership working.

21. For each of the LAA blocks a group has been drawn together with representatives from each of the four areas. These groups have been tasked with preparing an action plan by 31 March. The action plans will then be submitted to a Central Lancashire Cluster Group meeting on 5 April. Once finalised they will then be forwarded to Lancashire County Council.

**COMMENTS OF THE HEAD OF HUMAN RESOURCES**

22. There are no HR implications at this stage.

**COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE**

23. The details regarding the distribution of any Performance Reward Grant are still to be decided, but will determine the importance or otherwise in financial terms of the stretch targets. This grant is only available retrospectively and as such the Council needs to determine through the supporting action plans if the current level of resources available can deliver the targets within the LAA. Once this is known I will report to members on the options available for financing the delivery of the targets, should any additional resources be required.

**RECOMMENDATION**

24. Executive Cabinet are requested to note the progress report.

## REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

25. The report is presented for information.

## ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

26. None.

TIM RIGNALL  
HEAD OF CORPORATE & POLICY SERVICES

There are no background papers to this report.

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