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## **NOTTINGHAMSHIRE LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT BRIEFING**

**APRIL 2007**

Welcome to the April briefing on the Nottinghamshire LAA. The briefing is designed to update you on the progress and latest activities around the LAA and keep you informed about forthcoming meetings. Please note that the partnership website now has a contact list of respective block partners as well as diary of 2007 meetings and events, which can be viewed at [www.nottinghamshirepartnership.org.uk](http://www.nottinghamshirepartnership.org.uk)

If you have any queries around anything contained in the briefing contact Eve Dewsnap or Mark Williams on (0115) 9774208/9772825 or via email at: [eve.dewsnap@nottscc.gov.uk](mailto:eve.dewsnap@nottscc.gov.uk) or [mark.williams@nottscc.gov.uk](mailto:mark.williams@nottscc.gov.uk)

### **The Future Development of Local Area Agreements**

The Government has published guidance on how LAAs will be developed over the next year following suggestions set out in the "Strong and Prosperous Communities" White Paper. The Local Government Association staged a two day conference in Nottingham on 7<sup>th</sup> March; and Communities and Local Government Department staged a regional road show at the East Midlands Conference Centre on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> March. Both events were attended by members of the LAA Secretariat and the Partnership. The content and assumed implications of the October White Paper were dominant themes at both events. CLG have not actually confirmed the future working arrangements for the LAA. Information offered was for guidance purposes only.

Some of the main suggestions around how the LAA could work in future were:

- The Local Area Agreement will be central to Government's approach to the local area. Local Area Agreements are to be the main delivery agreement between central government and a local area. They will be part of a formal framework of co-operation between key strategic partners.
- The plan is to introduce an LAA Area Based Grant. This will replace the existing ring fenced funding arrangement which is linked to the establishment of specific LAA targets. All area based funding is to go through this route, there are to be no reporting conditions attached to this grant. Local authorities and their strategic partners will have a wider discretion in how to use this non-ring fenced grant to achieve desired stated outcomes and targets within the area.

- It is envisaged that in future, local authorities and their partners will use a variety of funding sources such as Council Tax, Mainstream Funding, single Capital Pot, ring fenced Grants as well as the Non- ring fenced Grant to support the delivery of local and national priorities and targets.
- In preparing the priorities for the new Local Area Agreement the lead authority must have regard to the respective sustainable Community Strategy, which in itself must contain an analysis of need within an area and long term priorities.
- Local Authorities and their partners are to work on a smaller set of priorities. There will be a national indicator set of some 200, from which a maximum of 35 will be chosen and agreed with Central Government (via Government Office) to reflect the main priorities for a particular area. In addition to this maximum 35 there will be 18 statutory targets relating to children and young people. Some of the maximum 35 indicators will be mandatory. It is not clear at this stage how many mandatory indicators there will be.
- Existing Reward Grant Targets that run to March 2009 must be honoured even if they do not form part of the 200 National Indicator set.

The 4<sup>th</sup> Block of the Local Area Agreement will be radically changed from the currently narrowly defined Economic Development and Enterprise Block. It will now include: Housing Demand and Supply, Transport, Environment and Climate Change, Culture and Sport.

- The Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) is to be replaced by the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) in 2009. The CAA will essentially be an audit of area performance against indicators, direction of travel, use of resources and risk assessment. The focus of the assessment will be less on historical performance and focussed more on the level of risk to the partnership achieving targets in the future. The CAA will investigate whether the partnership has identified those risks and assess how well those risks are currently being managed.
- The current six monthly performance review arrangement will be replaced by a single Annual Review, which will be informed by the Comprehensive Area Assessment (see above). The Annual Review will be the opportunity for the partnership and Government Office to examine progress in meeting targets, consider emerging priorities and where appropriate negotiate changes to agreed targets.

The White Paper has major performance management implications for the future. This will impact on both the local authority and its partners. Central Government will assess the area as a whole rather than a single organisation; managerial and reporting processes will need to be adapted in light of this.

The LAA Management Group will meet on 8<sup>th</sup> June to work towards reaching consensus on a small core number of priorities for Nottinghamshire in the new LAA. These core priorities will be based on robust gathered information, performance data, and the Community Strategy. The recommendations of the working group will be fed back to the Strategic Partnership Board and elected Members. This piece of work

should assist informed decision making around the main priorities for Nottinghamshire in its negotiations with Government for the new Local Area Agreement.

### **Suggested LAA Negotiating Timetable for 2007/08**

- June: Year End review of original LAA.  
Management Group meet to discuss priorities for new LAA.  
Recommendations to Strategic Partnership Board and elected members to agree priorities for the new LAA.
- July: Performance and Transition Planning Review with Government Office.
- September: Regional Road shows to discuss guidance and implementation arrangements.
- October: Submit proposed improvements to GOEM.
- November: Transitional Reviews with Government Office.
- December: Partnership consultation on the new LAA outcomes; frameworks, funding plans and performance arrangements. Government reviews proposed improvement targets.
- January: Negotiation of improvement targets. Partnership to submit revised outcomes framework to Government Office.
- February: Government Office makes its recommendation to central Government
- March: Government Minister signs off the new Local Area Agreement.

### **Reward Grant Element**

A group chaired by Alan Mellor, Chief Executive of Ashfield District Council, is due to meet on 1<sup>st</sup> May to discuss the distribution of the reward grant for achievement of stretch targets. Their findings will be reported back to the next LAA Management Group Meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> May.

### **LAA Year End Review**

The LAA Secretariat will be requesting performance data from the respective partners from the 1<sup>st</sup> April with a final deadline for all data and supporting commentary of 11<sup>th</sup> May. A year end performance self-assessment will be submitted to GOEM by the end of May, before a meeting with the Strategic Partnership Board in June.

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