

KENNET DISTRICT COUNCIL

Full Council 27th February 2007

Report Number DCS 08/2007

Wiltshire's Local Area Agreement

Report by Brad Fleet, Director of Community Services

1.0 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To seek Members' agreement to sign up to the principles set out in the appended Draft Local Area Agreement produced by the Wiltshire Strategic Board and to support selected outcomes contained therein, where these align with the Council's own Corporate Strategy and priorities and subject to resources being available.

2.0 Financial, Legal, Risk and Staffing Implications

- 2.1 There are no financial, legal, risk or staffing implications arising out of this report.

3.0 Introduction

- 3.1 Essentially, a Local Area Agreement (LAA) is an agreement between government and local areas which strikes a balance between the priorities of central Government, and those of local government and their partners. It involves negotiating a joint commitment to deliver services within a framework of measurable and accountable outcomes (or goals). The LAA should provide a clear focus for delivery of certain community strategies through partnership working over the next three years.
- 3.2 In Wiltshire the focus has been on delivering the objectives of the Sustainable Community Strategy which is the offspring of the Wiltshire Strategic Board - WiSB. Local Authorities and public/community organisations will work in partnership with the community to help address quality of life issues identified in the Sustainable Community Strategy. The work on the LAA has therefore been themed around the following areas: - Environment, Children & Young People, Economic Development & Enterprise, Healthy Communities, Older People, Safer Communities and Stronger Communities
- 3.3 One of the incentives to complete an LAA is the fact that the Government are offering 'enabling' measures to help achieve improvement and Kennet, for example, has suggested that authorities be 'enabled' to increase the number of housing properties owned by a local authority before a statutory Housing Revenue Account needs to

be set up (current de minimus is 50 homes) and the ability to retain any capital receipts following subsequent sale (i.e. the receipt is not 'pooled').

4.0 Resources for the LAA

4.1 The activities to deliver the LAA targets will be resourced in a number of ways:

- By Pump Priming Grant allocated to Local Public Service Agreement (LPSA) targets. This was distributed in 2006/7 and totalled £1,190,821.
- By specific funding aligned to LAA targets (to be agreed as part of the negotiation process). This is not new money – it is existing grants that may be aligned locally to support the delivery of LAA improvements.
- By capacity within organisations used to further LAA goals and targets – for example; staff time, premises, and alignment of specific budgets involved in LAA action. Each organisation will be asked to agree its commitment to delivering LAA activities

4.2 The following chart illustrates the level of pooled funding based upon current arrangements.

Block	Name of Grant	2007/08 £
Children & Young People	Children's Services Grant	1,094,000
	Key Stage 3 - Behaviour & Attendance	126,000
	Key Stage 3 - Central Co-ordination	425,000
	Positive Activities for Young People (includes Swindon Allocation)	118,000
	Primary Strategy - Central Co-ordination	546,000
	School Development Grant	600,000
	School Travel Advisers	79,000
C&YP Total		2,988,000
Environment	Waste Performance & Efficiency Grant	932,170
Environment Total		932,170
Safer & Stronger Communities	Anti-Social Behaviour Grant	100,000
	Safer Stronger Communities Fund	421,100
	Drugs Strategy Partnership Support Grant	82,360
S&SC Total		603,460
Grand Total		4,523,630

5.0 Implementation

5.1 Each WiSB partner has been asked to consider their part in delivering the activities in this LAA and take this to their respective boards or other executive body. This is to allow their representatives to sign up

to the LAA in full knowledge of that commitment. This is required before the LAA is finalised in March 2007.

6.0 This agreement in action

- 6.1 A number of activities will be ongoing within the first year of this agreement. Ongoing work will include: -
- Work to deliver the targets contained in this LAA, and to learn from the experience of that delivery.
 - Work to develop the outcomes as identified under each of the blocks. This work is likely to result in activities and targets to be included in future LAA's.
 - Work to refresh the LAA for the second and subsequent years. This will include the implications of the revised community strategy, other local changes, and national changes such as the implications of the Local Government White Paper.

7.0 Sign Up

- 7.1 'Signing-up' to the LAA will mean different things to according to the level of involvement.
- 7.2 Partnerships cannot commit partners to action under the LAA – it is the individual partners that make the commitment. Partnerships can give strategic coherence to the work of partners – both for a particular LAA block and for themes under the Community Strategy. A partnership is the place where partners can share their strategies and plans and build joint understanding and agreement. It may be the place where LAA action is developed and coordinated. Successful partnerships help partners to work within a shared sense of strategic intent.
- 7.3 It is important that partnerships are not held to account by WiSB for delivery. Accountability rests with individual partners who commit to specific action and targets, so partnerships must be clear about the accountability of individual partners. It is therefore important that Kennet District Council reserves the right to decide which outcomes it wishes to support using its own resources. Members will appreciate that the LAA proposes undertaking a huge amount of work on a large range of projects. Although not all will involve the District Councils, there is still an impressive list of outcomes where it is expected that the Districts will commit resources to assist with delivery.
- 7.4 As mentioned in 1.1 above, care is needed here because Kennet has its own adopted Corporate Strategy and priorities. It is therefore important that the Council reserves the ability to choose where and when it will become proactively involved.

8.0 The Local Area Agreement

- 8.1 Attached with this report is the latest draft of the agreement which will be negotiated with the government. The agreement has been subject to extensive negotiation with local organisations and groups and it is almost certain that some elements will change before it is finalised in March.

9.0 Conclusion

- 9.1 The LAA is a positive step towards improving the well being of the residents of Wiltshire and the partnership activities and proposed outcomes are worthy of support.

10. Recommendation

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT;

- 1) The Council agrees to sign up to the principles set out in the LAA and commits to help deliver certain activities.
- 2) The decision on which activities to be delegated to the Chief Executive and Directors, taking account of the Council's own corporate strategy, priorities and available resources.