

REPORT TO CABINET

REPORT OF: Corporate Head Partnerships and Organisational Improvement

REPORT NO.: POI 17

DATE: 12 May 2008

TITLE:	Draft Lincolnshire Local Area Agreement 2008-2011
FORWARD PLAN ITEM:	Yes
DATE WHEN FIRST APPEARED IN FORWARD PLAN:	November 2007
KEY DECISION OR POLICY FRAMEWORK PROPOSAL:	Key Decision

COUNCIL AIMS/ PORTFOLIO HOLDER NAME AND DESIGNATION:	Cllr Linda Neal	
CORPORATE PRIORITY:	N/A	
CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS:	Detailed in the Local Area Agreement	
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT IMPLICATIONS:	This report is publicly available via the Local Democracy link on the Council's website: www.southkesteven.gov.uk	
INITIAL EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT	Carried out and appended to report? Not Applicable	Full impact assessment required? No
BACKGROUND PAPERS:	Lincolnshire Local Area Agreement 2007-2010	

1. INTRODUCTION

Attached is a copy of the first draft of the Local Area Agreement (LAA) for Lincolnshire 2008-2011. This is the second LAA for Lincolnshire and its development is part of a national refresh of all LAA's which are due to be completed by June 2008. The draft LAA was published by the Lincolnshire Assembly on 14th March 2008.

LAAs are lists of improvement targets agreed with the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government on behalf of all government. The LAA is seen as the main way in which national government can influence targets set in Lincolnshire.

2. RECOMMENDATION

That the Cabinet consider the proposed priorities and performance measures as set out in the draft LAA and pass any comments on to the County Council.

That the Cabinet delegates authority to the Leader to agree any further changes necessary to secure sign off of this Agreement from GOEM.

3. DETAILS OF REPORT

In a two tier area like Lincolnshire the LAA is an agreement between the County Council and central government. However the County Council on its own cannot achieve the type of improvement targets set for example on health improvements, housing built and the type of employment available in an area. These require the input of a number of partners including local district councils.

The Government have reformed the performance management arrangements for local government and its partners. From April 2008 a set of 198 national indicators are being introduced to replace the Best Value Performance Indicators, a new 'Place Survey' with residents will take place every two years starting in the autumn 2008 (replacing the triennial BVPI satisfaction survey) and a Comprehensive Area Assessment comes into effect from 2009 (replacing the Comprehensive Performance Assessments). All of these are designed to measure the effectiveness of the combined efforts of the county and district councils as well as other public agencies such as the police, fire and health services.

The LAA has to include 16 mandatory national indicators on educational attainment as well as up to 35 other national indicators (drawn from the list of 198). The success of the partners in delivering a sustainable community strategy and with the new Comprehensive Area Assessment will be measured in part by how it performs against the LAA but will also take into account all 198 national indicators.

The development and delivery of the LAA is overseen by the Lincolnshire Assembly (Lincolnshire's Local Strategic Partnership) and South Kesteven District Council is represented on the LAA Strategy Board by the Leader of the Council.

To ensure that the LAA reflects the priorities and issues facing Lincolnshire it was decided early in the process to use the opportunity to create a new vision and community strategy for the county. A number of partner workshops have been held since the autumn and a public consultation exercise using the 'Big Skies, Big County, Big Future' has been carried out by the Assembly.

South Kesteven's Local Strategic Partnership have contributed to these events and put forward its three key priorities of Sustainable growth, Healthy Living and Community Cohesion for consideration. These have been reflected in the emerging Community Strategy and priorities set out in the draft LAA.

The emerging vision for the Community Strategy is one of developing a 'Lifestyle County' based on five overall themes:

- Strong communities (where people want to live and can realise their potential)
- Opportunities for good health (good health services and healthy lifestyles)
- People are connected (transport and ICT)
- Strong diverse economy (shape economy to meet our needs)
- Best use of our environment (manage climate change, protect and enhance natural assets, use environment to drive economy)
- Innovative, dynamic organisations working together (learning, sharing, value for money)

These themes will be developed into more detailed objectives and programmes of work.

The LAA is based on nine priorities, all of which are aligned with the longer term themes in the community strategy. The priorities have been identified through analysing performance information, discussions with partner organisations and the public consultation. Improvement targets are now being negotiated on the following priorities with the Government Office for the East Midlands:

- Children and Young People
- Improve health
- Improve skills
- Reduce alcohol related and similar problems
- Create better communities through sustainable growth and improved housing provision
- Promote social cohesion
- Adapt to climate change
- Improve quality of life for vulnerable people
- Getting connected

- Improve efficiency

Lincolnshire's draft LAA contains some 64 national indicators of which 17 may involve the setting of separate targets based on district council boundaries. It is anticipated that relevant LAA targets will be reflected in partner's corporate/business plans.

Arrangements for managing the performance of the LAA are set out on pages 11 and 12 of the attached document. These include local arrangements to integrate with the commissioning and planning cycles of partner organisations, local scrutiny of local area targets, quarterly reviews by the Chief Executives (LAA Planning Group) and scrutiny by the LAA Strategy Board (political leaders and leaders of executive agencies from across Lincolnshire).

5. COMMENTS OF SECTION 151 OFFICER

The Budget report presented to Council on 3rd March 2008 referred to the ongoing negotiations between partners to develop a new LAA for 2008/9 to 2010/11 in line with Government requirements. The report identified that there will be no pump-priming or specific grants available for LAAs although the Government has merged a number of the previously ring fenced specific grants into the new Area Based Grant. The single area based grant for Lincolnshire is allocated to the County Council. In 2008/9 this will be £33.8m and will increase to £55.3m in 2009/10 when Supporting People grant is transferred. While this is not ring fenced for spending on the LAA, it can be used to work towards achieving the set national indicators and LAA targets.

In addition, South Kesteven has also been allocated Community cohesion area based grant of £25k, £49k and £75k per annum for the financial years 2008/9 to 2010/11. The budget report identified the need to consider the use of this funding once further details of the LAA are known.

It is proposed to present a further report to Cabinet to allocate this Area Based Grant together with other unallocated sources of funding which have been notified to the Council since the preparation of the budget.

It is anticipated by the Lincolnshire Assembly that Lincolnshire's Area Based Grant will be used to fund activity across both the Lincolnshire Community Strategy and LAA.

The Government is providing a special LAA Performance Reward Grant as an incentive to meeting LAA targets. Details of the size of grant and how it will be applied have not yet been confirmed but it is anticipated that it will be around £3m for Lincolnshire. Members and officers will need to keep this under review to ensure that the Council's interests are represented in the negotiations regarding this grant and the overall financial impact of the LAA generally.

6. COMMENTS OF MONITORING OFFICER

The governance arrangements for the new LAA are being revised though it is anticipated that the Leader of each council involved will continue to be appointed as the representative on the strategic board. Changes to the officer level delivery groups are expected with the adoption of new priority areas.

A final document is expected for “sign off” by early June.

Statutory partners such as the district council will be under a duty to have regard to LAA targets in which they are named.

7. CONTACT OFFICER

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