

Overview and Scrutiny Committee for Community and Environmental Services

Title: Getting Closer to Communities – a draft strategy for local area working in Buckinghamshire

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1.0 Background information

1.1 Attached is the latest working draft of “Getting Closer to Communities – a draft strategy for local area working in Buckinghamshire”. The contents page gives an overview of the scope of the strategy.

1.2 Local area working is not new to Buckinghamshire County Council and the background section outlines some of the activities to date. The document goes on, however, to outline the potential to take local working to the next stages in the County with some new key aims and objectives for the period to 2008/09.

1.3 Consultation has taken place with the District Councils, Parish Councils, Police and Primary Care Trusts on the emerging aims and objectives and on the local community boundaries. Whilst there is general support for the County Council to get closer to its communities, there remain concerns from some about the potential levels of delegation, the introduction of local communities and specific issues linked to local community boundaries.

1.4 As a consequence the draft strategy proposes a phased introduction of the 14 objectives. Section 5 of the strategy outlines the possible 1st Phase for discussion. This will more likely to be delivered in the next year within existing resources, and will enable certain activities to be piloted and reviewed before rolling out more widely.

2.0 Timetable

2.1 The current timetable for the discussion and decision on the draft strategy is as follows:

O&S Committee	25.5.05
Leadership Group	27.5.05
County/District Leaders	1.6.05
Bucks SP Steering Group	7.6.05
COMT	8.6.05
CADEX	10.6.05
Chairman’s Briefing or Members Workshop	tba June
Leaders Advisory Group	13.6.05
Community Leadership PAG	20.6.05

Strategic Solutions Group	23.6.05
All Local Committees	July
Cabinet	27.6.05
New Members Induction	30.6.05
Council	21.7.05
District Local Strategic Partnerships	July

- 2.2 Every effort will be made in this timetable to respond through changes in the strategy and action plan to issues and concerns raised. Ultimately, however, it will be for Cabinet to recommend to Council the way forward.

3.0 Views Sought

- 3.1 The views of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for Community and Environmental Services are sought on the attached paper - "Getting Closer to Communities - a draft strategy for local area working in Buckinghamshire".