



Report to BEECHES LOCAL AREA FORUM

Title: LOCAL AREA WORKING

To: Beeches Local Area Forum

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1 Purpose of report

- a Members are asked to **note**
 - i The purpose of Local Area Forums (LAF)
 - ii The proposed constitution for The Beeches Local Area Forum (see Appendix 1)
- b Members are asked to **agree**
 - i. That elected members Buckinghamshire County Council, South Bucks District Council and nominated representatives from the Parishes of Burnham, Dorney, Farnham Royal, Stoke Poges and Taplow meet as a fully constituted Local Area Forum (LAF) provisionally titled 'The Beeches'
 - ii. A new name for The Beeches LAF if this is considered necessary
 - iii. The proposed constitution for The Beeches Local Area Forum

2. Background

- c Local decision-making has been part of the County Council's policy since 2000 when the County Council received a clear message from Parishes that they saw the County as remote and unapproachable. 4 Local Committees were established by the County Council to help address this and over the following 8 years these committees successfully worked to evolve local decision making.
- d The establishment of 19 Local Area Forums (LAF) is the next stage in this process. These forums will enable devolution of influence and decision-making to a much more local level.
- e As a first step during 2009/10 the County Council has devolved approximately £44,000 funding to each of the 19 Local Area Forums. This is made up of funding for Positive Activities for Young People; Grants for Early Years

Provision; existing delegated highways/transport budget; and a discretionary revenue budget.

- f** The County Council will also use the Local Area Forums as building blocks to plan and deliver its services. Through the Local Area Forums Parishes will be encouraged to bring for discussion their own priorities and influence service delivery in their local area. LAFs are also strongly encouraged to get involved in a wide range of local consultation on matters affecting their specific communities
- g** The need to understand and measure outcomes for local communities is also an important aspect of the new Local Area Agreement (LAA) framework. An understanding of local community needs will be the starting point for the LAA, service planning, budgetary processes and is central to Bucks County Council performance management processes.
- h** The County Council is now seeking to move to the creation of a formal Local Area Forum (LAF) for this area.

- Report ends -