



South Bucks  
District Council



# Agenda

## LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT (LAA) JOINT SCRUTINY TASK AND FINISH GROUP

**Date** Tuesday 30 October 2007  
**Time** 2.00 pm  
**Venue** Mezzanine Room 1, County Hall, Aylesbury

| Agenda Item   | Time          | Page No       |
|---|---------------|---------------|
| <b>1 ATTENDEES AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b>  | <b>2pm</b>    |               |
| <b>2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b>   |               |               |
| <b>3 PROTOCOL FOR THE OPERATING OF THE TASK AND FINISH GROUP</b><br>The protocol agreed by the Joint Chairman's Network will be tabled for sign off by the working group.<br><br><b>Katharine Woods, Assistant Corporate Director</b>   | <b>2:05pm</b> | <b>1 - 2</b>  |
| <b>4 INTRODUCTION TO THE LAA (DVD)</b>  | <b>2:25pm</b> |               |
| <b>5 LAA MEMBER BRIEFING</b><br>Members will receive a briefing from the LAA lead officer, outlining the current block structure, governance and partner involvement and an overview of current performance.<br>The next stage of LAA development will be presented and the areas of potential interest for scrutiny will be explored.<br>There will be an opportunity for questions.<br><br><b>Jackie Fisk, Policy Officer</b> | <b>2:45pm</b> | <b>3 - 6</b>  |
| <b>6 SCOPING THE WORK OF THE TASK GROUP</b><br>The scoping document and briefing papers will be discussed to clarify areas of focus for the working group.<br><br><b>Angela Macpherson, Policy Officer</b>  | <b>3:30pm</b> | <b>7 - 8</b>  |
| <b>7 WORKING TOGETHER - MEETINGS AND COMMUNICATIONS</b><br>Members will discuss general working protocol to include:<br>Members' undertaking of evidence gathering with officer support,  | <b>4pm</b>    | <b>9 - 10</b> |

circulation of papers, member and officer contact details,  
publicising of meetings, access to background information,  
outline meetings calendar.

### **Chairman**

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*For further information please contact: Helen Wailling on 01296 383614  
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### **Members**

Mrs M Aston  
Mrs P Birchley  
Mr S Chhokar  
Mr P Cooper  
Mr A Dibbo

Mr A Hussain  
Mr T Jones  
Mr D Meacock  
Mr A Oxley  
Mr J Savage

**Protocol for the Operation of a Joint County and District Council  
Overview and Scrutiny Review Committee (JOSRC)**

**Membership**

**Choice of authority to chair the committee**

This will be in rotation by agreement of the Joint Scrutiny Chairmen's Network. If no consensus can be reached, this will be decided by a majority vote, with each member having an individual vote

**Size of committee**

The ideal size of a committee is between 8 and 12 members drawn from all participating authorities.

No member of the executive should be included in the membership of the JOSRC.

Other co-options will be agreed by the JOSRC

**Party political balance**

Whilst every attempt will be made to ensure fair representation across the political parties, representation from participating authorities will be a matter for each authority to determine

**Substitution**

There is an expectation that committee members will make every effort to attend all meetings. Named substitutes will be determined at the start of a review and will be invited to all meetings as either an observer or as a participating member as appropriate

**Quorum**

Every effort will be made by participating authorities to attend all meetings. However, as a minimum, 50% of the membership will be required for the meetings to be quorate

**Voting rights**

Every effort will be made to reach a consensus over the findings/recommendations from a review.

In the event of no consensus being reached, a vote will be taken, with each member having a single vote and the Chairman a casting vote

**Committee Support**

**Timing and frequency of meetings**

The timing and frequency of meetings, including an indicative end date will be determined by each JOSRC, taking into account the need to be flexible over timing and location to meet members' needs.

**Officer support**

Officer support will be provided by the authority chairing the JOSRC.

**Expenses**

Each authority will be responsible for the expenses of its members. Any additional expenses will be shared in proportion to the membership

## **Reporting Process**

### **Reports**

A written report with recommendations will be produced at the end of each review. Committee members from each authority will be responsible for ensuring the report is disseminated to their authority using individual reporting mechanisms. In addition, the Chairman will be responsible for ensuring the report is presented to any other organisation which participates in the review or is able to implement the review recommendations.

### **Minority Report**

Every effort will be made to reach a consensus over recommendations from a review. However, where a minimum of two members do not agree with the findings, a minority report from them may be submitted.

### **Publicity**

The Chairman of the JOSRC in consultation with the Vice Chairman will approve all press releases in connection with the review.

### **Monitoring of implementation of recommendations**

The officer supporting the JOSRC will manage the process and provide a report to the Joint Scrutiny Chairmen's Network

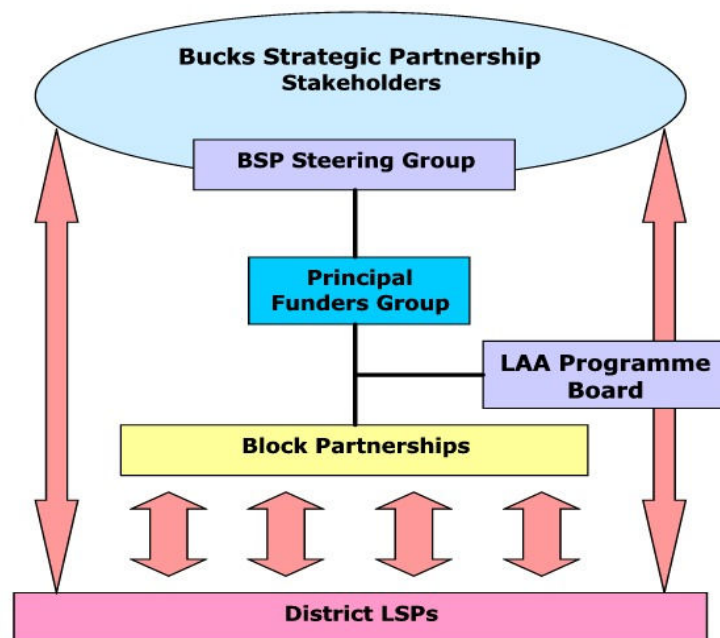
**Report**

To: **Joint Scrutiny Task and Finish Group**  
 From: **Jackie Fisk, Policy Officer (Local Area Agreement), BCC**  
 Re: **Local Area Agreement**  
 Date: 30 October 2007

1. The Buckinghamshire Local Area Agreement (LAA) is a 3-year agreement between partners in Buckinghamshire and central government. Basically, it is a delivery plan for the Sustainable Community Strategy; it sets out the shared outcomes towards which partners will work together to improve the quality of life for local residents. The agreement is refreshed each year. The theme of the Buckinghamshire LAA is 'Promoting Prosperity – Tackling Inequalities.' The LAA came into effect on 1 April 2006 and was refreshed in April 2007. It currently contains 79 indicators, some of which are mandatory targets.
2. The purpose of the LAA is to achieve better results for residents through smarter partnership working and by making the best use of the resources available.

**Governance**

3. The current LAA governance arrangements are illustrated below (Please note that governance arrangements are currently under review):



4. The LAA is organised around 4 'blocks' although there is also wide-ranging cross-cutting activity:
  - Healthier Communities and Older People
  - Children and Young People

- Safer and Stronger Communities
- Economy and Environment

## **Performance Management**

5. The LAA has robust performance management arrangements, with clear lines of accountability. Each LAA indicator has a 'target owner' who is responsible for co-ordinating partnership activity to deliver the target. The target is performance-managed by Block Leads (drawn from County and District Councils, Thames Valley Police, Bucks Economic Partnership, Bucks PCT) who report on the performance of the block to the relevant partnership board. There is reporting by exception to the Principal Funders Group (PFG), which is the democratically accountable governance body for the LAA. The LAA Programme Board, whose members are senior officers from the local authorities and representatives from all key partners including the Voluntary and Community Sector, manages the operation of the LAA programme and advises the PFG.
6. Each indicator has a delivery plan, which sets out all partners contributing to delivery and the actions planned in order to achieve it. The plans are quality assured by the Block Leads and publicly available. There are quarterly performance monitoring reports, which are published and shared with partners and the Government Office for the South East. The transparency of the performance management arrangements has facilitated increasingly close partnership working over the last 18 months.

## **Progress after Year 1**

7. The progress identified by partners and GOSE after Year 1 includes:
  - Strengthened partnership working, but acknowledgement that it is early days in terms of seeing substantial difference on the ground.
  - Wide partnership buy-in to the LAA as the delivery mechanism for the priorities set out in the Sustainable Community Strategy
  - Improved partnership performance management
  - Capacity of partners to respond to priorities is targeted through the shared priorities set out in the LAA
  - Stronger involvement of the voluntary and community sector, but further development needed
  - Transparency over priorities and how they are being delivered
  - Shared partnership approach to consideration of issues such as Equalities and Diversity.

GOSE concluded that, in general, progress was being made on all blocks. It also recognised that a number of difficult and challenging targets had been set and that it would be unrealistic to expect these all to be met at this stage of the LAA. It recognised that some improved outcomes for the people of Buckinghamshire are already being recorded and that partners are working increasingly well together.

## **New LAA from 2008**

8. The Local Government White Paper sets out fundamentally different arrangements for the LAA.

- The LAA will be the only place where government will agree targets with Buckinghamshire.
- All areas will have to introduce a New LAA from 2008.
- Statutory responsibility on the County Council to consult and negotiate an LAA, duty on named partners to co-operate.
- New National Performance Framework – ‘National Indicator Set’ of 198 indicators on which an area will report on to government (and report to local residents).
- Of this 198, up to 35 will be prioritised and set out in the LAA, plus 17 statutory Early Years and Education targets.
- We can also have local targets of our choosing, but these will only be reported locally – not to government.
- More un-ringfenced funding – more freedom on spending decisions locally.
- There will be a ‘reward’ element – awaiting details from government in November.

There will be a consultation with all key partner organisations and the public on the priorities to be reflected in the New LAA from end October to end January.





**Joint Scrutiny Review  
Draft**

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|--|--|
| Subject of the Review  | The effectiveness of Buckinghamshire’s Local Area Agreement (LAA) in its early phase   |
| Purpose of the Review  | Using a specific case study approach, to determine whether the LAA is having the desired impact and democratic accountability  |
| Anticipated outcome(s)   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A clear understanding of the role of councils, members and partners in the development, delivery and accountability of a successful LAA</li> <li>• Clarity and appropriateness of governance arrangements</li> <li>• Identification of any improvements that can be made</li> </ul>   |
| Reasons for undertaking the review, including where the ideas have come from   | The LAA has been in place for one year. In 2008, Government will be placing greater emphasis on the LAA as the delivery mechanism for ensuring the public, voluntary and public sectors work more collaboratively to deliver enhanced services. This will entail growth of and a further central pooling of budgets. It will be important to ensure robust accountability within the new framework and effective service delivery  |
| What is the potential impact of the review on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Residents</li> <li>• Equality issues</li> <li>• Helping the councils to achieve their main priorities</li> <li>• Adding value to the organisations</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The LAA seeks to tackle those problems which have the greatest impact on the quality of life of local residents</li> <li>• The theme of the LAA is Promoting Prosperity – Tackling Inequalities</li> <li>• Delivery of a successful LAA is a priority for the 5 Councils and their partners, all of whom have signed a commitment to the successful delivery of the target outcomes</li> </ul>  |
| Councils undertaking the review  | County Council and all District Councils   |
| Membership arrangements  | 2 Members from each participating authority  |
| Link to relevant council plans   | Delivery of a successful LAA is a corporate priority for all Councils  |
| Key issues for the review to address   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What has been the impact of the LAA to date and what arrangements are in place for feedback to stakeholders?</li> <li>• How has the LAA improved service delivery?</li> <li>• Where does accountability lie?</li> <li>• How are members involved in the development of priorities and monitoring of performance?</li> <li>• How are members, stakeholders, users and residents engaged in the identification of priorities?</li> <li>• Is there a robust and transparent performance management framework?</li> <li>• How are priorities linked to individual council plans and performance management frameworks?</li> <li>• How effective has the LAA been in terms of savings and additional funds accrued?</li> </ul> |
| Methodology  | Using a ‘ <i>variety of case studies</i> ’ basket of indicators such as those around the Crime and Disorder and a case study approach, determine:  |

## Joint Scrutiny Review Draft

|                                     |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
|                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How the priorities were developed</li> <li>• Who was involved</li> <li>• How delivery is being managed</li> <li>• Where the results are reported</li> <li>• How and by whom remedial action is taken</li> <li>• Whether delivery is making a difference on the ground</li> </ul> |
| Press & Publicity                   | <p>Article in Council magazines announcing review and inviting views</p> <p>Press release at the end of the review to explain results</p> <p>Article for the Centre for Public Scrutiny</p>   |
| Key background papers for reference | <p>LAA Agreement</p> <p>Overview of the LAA aims and objectives</p> <p>Overview of first year annual results</p> <p>Chapter 5 of the White Paper – Local Government as a strategic leader and place-shaper</p>  |
| Written evidence to be provided by: | Evidence will be collected through presentations, desk research, whole committee discussion, meetings and visits to gather information from community representatives, service users, partner organisations   |
| Oral evidence to be provided by:    | Chairman of Bucks Strategic Partnership, Members of Principal Funders' Group, Block Leads, LAA coordinator, LAA Policy Officer, selected target owners, members of CDRPs, County and District Councillors Users, Partners, GOSE representative  |
| Potential partners                  | To be discussed   |
| Resources required                  | Meeting facilities around Buckinghamshire<br>Democratic Officer support (BCC), Policy Officer Support (BCC lead with support from District Officers)  |
| Timetable and timing                | Initial meeting October 2007 with a view to issuing report in March/ April 2008.  |
| Reporting mechanism                 | To each council's most appropriate scrutiny review body to agree/amend the formal recommendations<br>Committee members to present to their authority using their individually agreed reporting mechanisms<br>Chairman to disseminate to partner organisations   |

**LAA Scrutiny Task and Finish Group Outline timetable**

| Event                             | Oct 07 | Nov 07                   | Dec 07          | Jan 08 | Feb 08 | Mar 08 | Apr 08 |
|-----------------------------------|--------|--------------------------|-----------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Group meetings                    | 30 Oct | 13 Nov<br>12.30 – 2.30pm | 5 Dec<br>12-2pm | X      | X      | X      |        |
| Block lead briefing               |        | 13 Nov                   |                 |        |        |        |        |
| Performance management induction  |        | 13 Nov                   |                 |        |        |        |        |
| Confirm detail of task group work |        | 13 Nov                   |                 |        |        |        |        |
| Chairman's briefing               |        | 21 Nov                   |                 |        |        |        |        |
| Evidence gathering                |        |                          |                 |        |        |        |        |
| Agree recommendations             |        |                          |                 |        |        |        |        |
| Draft report                      |        |                          |                 |        |        |        |        |
| Final report                      |        |                          |                 |        |        |        |        |

