

Minutes

LAF/LCP TASK & FINISH GROUP

MINUTES OF THE LAF/LCP TASK & FINISH GROUP HELD ON WEDNESDAY 2 MAY 2012, IN ROOM 84, OLD COUNTY OFFICES, COMMENCING AT 1.30 PM AND CONCLUDING AT 4.00 PM.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr N Brown, Mr T Egleton, Ms N Glover, Mr W Lidgate, Ms J Puddefoot, Mr B Roberts and Mr P Rogerson

5 UPDATE ON 28TH MAY EVIDENCE SESSION

James Povey, Policy Officer provided members with an update on the draft agenda for the full day evidence session.

During subsequent discussions the following points were noted;

Members suggested that the LAF Review should include;

- The Vice Chairman of the LAFs, Councillors and Portfolio holders
- Those who attend the LAFs from a District Council perspective as it would be useful to hear their views.
- From a South Bucks perspective Anita Cranmer, Cabinet Member for Communities and Leisure
- Parishes/Parish Clerks should be involved
- Representatives from each of the LAF areas

All Chief Executives should be notified what the review is about.

Action: James Povey

Members suggested the following should be addressed as part of the review;

- Who is willing to contribute to the LAFs
- What are they willing to contribute
- What do members of the public want to see from the LAFs
- What do members of the public think is necessary for them to want to be involved
- What drives people to attend the LAFs
- Are people happy with the areas they are in



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



- What is the direction of the LAFS
- A definition of the LAFs and what are they supposed to be achieving
- Strategic direction
- Service provision
- Expected delivery
- A breakdown of LAFs by each district is needed along with a list of achievements over the last two years.
- Locality managers should be looked to to provide an update in advance
- The review could be an opportunity to get Districts more involved and engage with a wider group.
- Ways of increasing the attendance at LAFs needs to be looked at
- Looking at the way forward to the boundary changes need to be taken into account
- It is difficult for those in rural areas to get feedback

Do officers give reports at other LAFs on topics such as domestic violence and how are agenda items determined? If a local issue is raised in the ward it should be taken to the appropriate LAF. LAFs are now raising awareness on issues such as Adult Social Care and winter warmth etc.

Questions are to be formulated and distributed to members for comment.

Action: James Povey

Forthcoming Evidence sessions

Details of forthcoming evidence sessions were distributed. Members were advised that the online survey is up and running. 130 people have accessed the website to look at the survey and 90 people have completed the survey so far.

A member asked if commitment can be obtained from the District Council to put the survey on their website

Concern was expressed about the inflexibility of the online survey as comments have been received such as it is not possible to get an overview of the form and pages already completed cannot be returned to. The possibility of having a PDF of the form on the website will be looked into.

Action: James Povey

A member suggested that representatives from Youth Councils and Parliaments at the Grammar/Upper schools should be invited to contribute to the evidence sessions as well as Action for Youth.

Action: James Povey

A member asked if the public have invited to attend the evidence sessions as it is vital to engage 'real' people and have an understanding if/why they do not re-attend the LAF meetings.

A member suggested using the LAFs rather than Full Council to raise petitions as this might encourage attendance from members of the public. A recommendation is to be made for petitions to go via the LAFs and for the corresponding officer to attend to provide a response to any questions raised.

Action: ???

Concern was expressed about lack of representation from the Voluntary and Community sector from organisations such as ImPACT Bucks and Action for Youth. There need to be definition of their role and where they fit in with the LAFs.

LAF Attendance

Members were referred to the map and graph detailing average LAF attendance, peak public attendance and parish council engagement levels with LAFs. Members were advised that the figures shown were taken over a two year period and attendance figures include the chairman, vice-chairman and locality manager.

A member explained that the Beaconsfield Forum is restricted to members only (Town Councillors etc) and members of the public do not attend the meetings.

Local Area Forum Costs

A document giving details of the LAF costs was distributed to members for discussion. The document included details on the forum meetings costs (room hire, publicity, Democratic Services support), support from Localities, other service areas, total Locality Services budget and partner contributions. The costs shown also include preparation time. Members were advised that £165,000 could be saved if there were no LAF meetings.

During discussion the following points were made and questions raised;

A member said that the costs shown for the LAFs seem unrealistic and asked if support was included in the figures given?

A member referred to the figure of 1,008 BCC officer hours annually and asked how this very accurate figure was calculated and if it includes travel time. The figure shown is based on Aylesbury Vale Locality Managers travel, preparation and meeting time. The costs are not true – they are a generalisation.

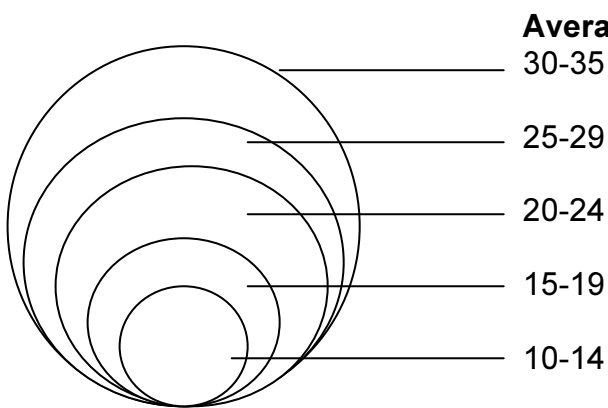
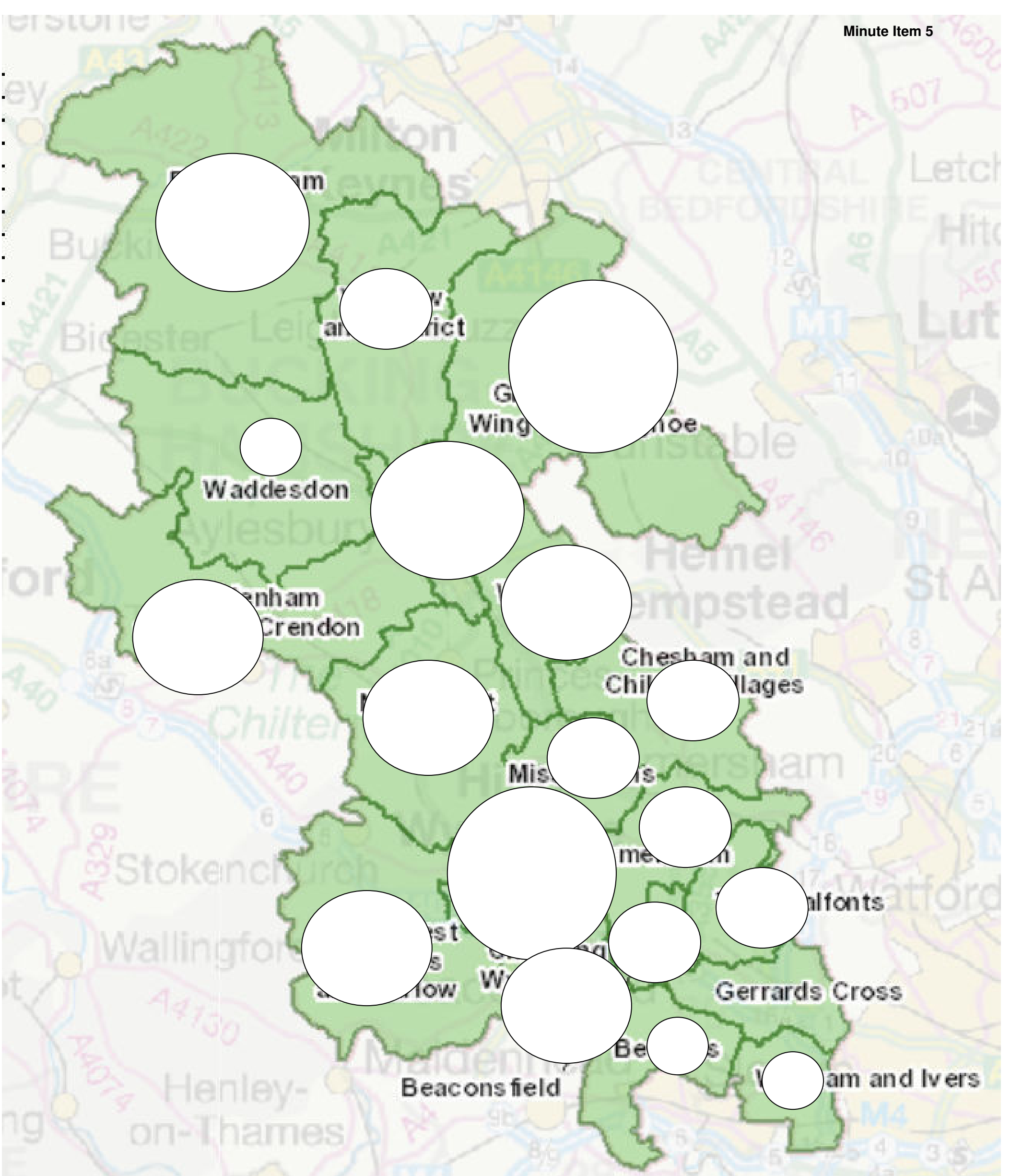
A member asked if it was possible to present the context of the overall budget for community delivery into a triangular format. Members were advised that the review is only on the LAFs not the whole locality strategy.

A member referred to the figures shown for the July 2008 advising a cost of £1million a year to deliver the LAFs and funding of £600,000 and asked if these figures had changed.

A member said there needs to be an understanding of what LAFs do and the cost as there may be issues that have no physical value that are delivered as well as development and links to other services such as Adult Social Services.

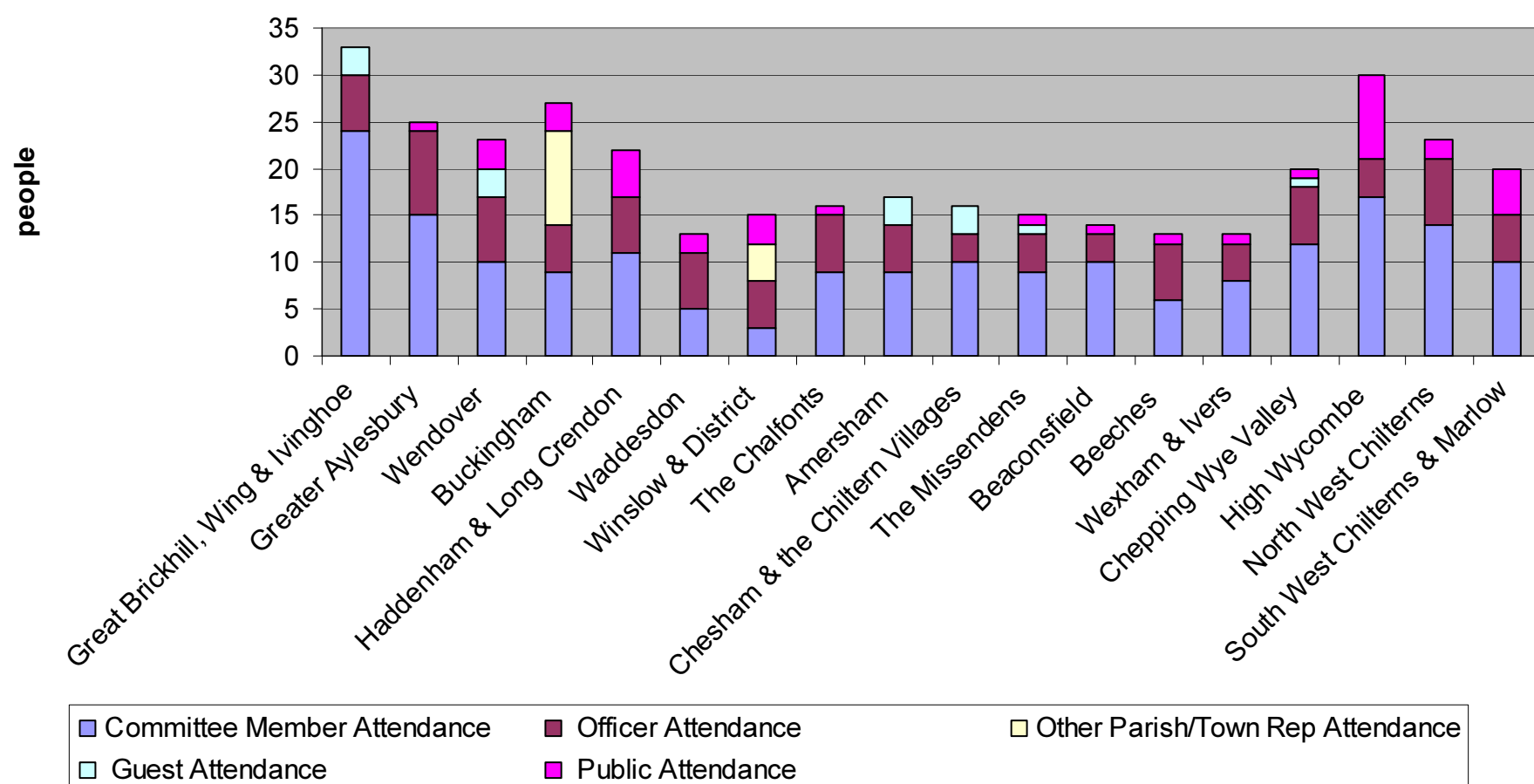
A member added that partnership working and engagement has not been factored in as part of the review and should be taken into account as this gives a baseline for more/less meetings and cost sharing with other District Councils.

CHAIRMAN



Data is taken from LAF attendance lists taken over approx the last 2 years. This encompasses approx 6-8 LAF meetings by the longer established LAFs, and as little as 3 in the more recently formed LAFs such as Beaconsfield.

Average LAF Attendance by Group



Peak Public Attendance

LAF	Peak Public Attendance During last 2 years
Great Brickhill, Wing & Ivinghoe	2
Greater Aylesbury	5
Wendover	13
Buckingham	7
Haddenham & Long Crendon	9
Waddesdon	3
Winslow & District	6
The Chalfonts	3
Amersham	1
Chesham & the Chiltern Villages	0
The Missendens	7
Beaconsfield	3
Beeches	2
Wexham & Ivers	2
Chepping Wye Valley	8
High Wycombe	21
North West Chilterns	5
South West Chilterns & Marlow	8

Parish Council Engagement Levels with LAFs

LAF	Total Town/Parish Councils/Meetings in Area	Average Parish Council Attendance Level (%)	Low Engaged Parish Councils	Non Engaged Parish Councils
Great Brickhill, Wing & Ivinghoe	16	62.95	3	0
Greater Aylesbury	8	53.91	2	1
Wendover	7	64.29	1	0
Buckingham	36	30.56	5	12
Haddenham & Long Crendon	15	41.54	0	4
Waddesdon	14	28.06	5	3
Winslow & District	15	34.76	4	3
The Chalfonts	4	75	0	0
Amersham	5	66.15	1	0
Chesham & the Chiltern Villages	6	77.27	0	0
The Missendens	2	95.83	0	0
Beaconsfield	1	100	0	0
Beeches	5	31.67	1	2
Wexham & Ivers	2	95	0	0
Chepping Wye Valley	5	72.86	0	0
High Wycombe LCP	1	0	1	1
North West Chilterns	9	65.08	0	0
South West Chilterns & Marlow	13	31.54	2	3

Local Area Forum Costs

The County Council supports LAFs by:

- meeting the operating costs of LAFs - administration, room hire, publicity, note-taking etc.
- providing officer support to each Local Area Forum through Lead Area Officers (Group Manager or Head of Service level), Localities Managers, Democratic Services Officers and staff from other service areas.
- allocating budgets for the use of each LAF to help fund solutions to local priorities

Forum Meeting costs

Democratic Services (room hire, publicity, DS officer support) costs charged to corporate account.

	Cost	No of mtgs	Average cost per mtg
2008/9	£56,361	30	£1,880
2009/10	£62,925	61	£1,032
2010/11	£90,369	75	£1,205
2011/12	£112,690	66	£1,707

Average cost per meeting changes largely associated with extra workload incurred from meeting rearrangements, and extra administrative services required. There is also some variability on venue provision with this sometimes having to be paid for by BCC and occasionally parish councils able to provide.

Costs incurred by other BCC services are absorbed by the contributing services such as Locality Services, Transport for Buckinghamshire, Adult Social Care (see below).

Other Service Areas

Based on an illustration of officer time incurred at each LAF in the Aylesbury Vale, it is calculated that the LAF Meetings take up some 1,008 BCC officer hours annually, and some 684¹ of other public sector partner officer hours (such as District Council lead offices, PCSOs, Police Inspectors, Fire Service Reps etc).

Using an average Locality Managers hourly rate (some officer attendees will be paid more, some less) of £33 per hour this would equate to a cost of £33,264 to BCC service areas.

Some LAFs also have various sub groups which can absorb further officer time (as much as 34 BCC hours per annum at some LAFs, but typically more in the region of 10 hours per annum, and some have no sub groups). Based on an average of 10hrs for each LAF this would give a total cost of approx £6k.

¹ Note that Aylesbury Vale LAFs are typically better supported by the Police and District Council than other districts and this is likely to be an overestimation of partner staff time.

An estimate of all BCC staff costs including democratic services would therefore come to approx £152k (113k + 33k + 6k).

There is a common misapprehension that the cost of LAFs exceeds £1m p.a.

This is believed to be based upon a misunderstanding that the Locality Services budget = the cost of LAFs.

For clarity, the total Locality Services budget is:

Year	Total Budget	Operational budget	Local Priorities	LINK
2011/12	£1,188m	£597,747	£412,248	£178,311
2010/11	£1,280m	£694,690	£407,113	£178,926

LINK (Local Involvement Networks)- Now renamed Local Health Watch, local community groups which influence local health and social care services.

Overall it is difficult to make a clear distinction between the cost of LAFs and other Localism activities undertaken by the Localities Team using their operational budget.

Partner Contributions to LAFs

	Partner Support
Aylesbury Vale	AVDC quite good – Provide Lead Officer to each LAF and other staff attend for questions and other agenda items when required. Also provide an AVDC newsletter with LAF agenda. TVP good – PCSOs, officer and inspector attend all LAFs. Fire Service attend some LAFs, RAF Halton represented at Wendover.
Chiltern	<i>Christine Gardner to advise CDC are looking to provide officer support</i>
Wycombe	<i>Madeleine Howe to advise WDC recently withdrew officer support for LAFs</i>
South Bucks	<i>Rebecca Carley to advise SBDC provides officer support & often at a high level</i>

None of the District Councils delegate any decision making or budget to the LAFs

Overall

The Localities Team operation budget for 2011/12 was £598k in 2011/12, however a great deal of the team's work is not spent on LAFs but instead on other Localism activities which often link with or are connected with the LAFs. Officer time from other service areas is also incurred at the LAF meetings.

Using data from Democratic Services and from information on staff time required by LAFs in Aylesbury Vale indicates the costs incurred per annum by BCC for the actual LAF meetings amounts to approx £152k.

The 2011/12 Local Priorities delegate budget from BCC to LAFs totalled £412,248.

LAF Review Progress Update

Meetings

Forthcoming Meetings	Review Group Attendees
8 May – SBDC LAF Meeting	Mary Baldwin & Bill Lidgate
10 May – WDC LAF Meeting	Brian Roberts & Paul Rogerson
11 May – CDC LAF Meeting	Brian Roberts & <i>Noel Brown</i>
AVDC LAF Meet TBC	Brian Roberts and Jenny Puddefoot
28 May – All day Public Evidence Session	All
31 May – Private Wash Up Session	All
12 July – Final meeting to sign off report	All
24 July - Overview & Scrutiny Commissioning Committee	
10 Sept - Cabinet	

Evidence Gathering Update

Evidence	Update	Next steps
Online Survey	Launched online 20 th April – open until 18 th May (4 weeks)	Analysis and findings report.
Written Statement Requests	The following have been invited to comment: Fire Service, RAF Halton, selected Voluntary and Community Sector Groups provided by Localities Team. Website also invites written comments.	Statements to be requested from Children & Young People, and Susie Yapp.
Arrangements at other Local Authorities	Wiltshire rep visit to BCC at Progress Meeting. Information on others being gathered.	Produce summary report
District Council meetings	Meetings booked	Summary report following meetings.
Evidence Session	Provisional agenda drafted (see over page)	Agree lines of questioning and obtain any background info required.
Report on LAF Attendance	Drafted (see papers)	
Report on LAF delegated budget spending	Drafted (see papers)	
Report on LAF Costs	Drafted (see papers)	
Report on LAF Benefits,	Some information	Other evidence

Achievements, Delivery against objectives. Overall SWOT analysis.	gathered on this to date with Locality Managers (LMs) providing examples of how LAFs are delivering their functions. Have also advised on good practice and explained variations in LAF performance. Annually LMs produce LAF summaries explaining projects supported.	collected will highlight other LAF positives and negatives. Group to advise on summary format
LAF Current and Future Roles	2008 Localities Strategy identifies current role, and LMs can highlight any additions to this. Chris Williams presentation at Planning Meeting.	Other evidence sources to identify future roles.

Publicising Review

The review has been publicised using the following channels, directing people to the website and the online survey if they attend LAFs:

- Press release (featured in Bucks Herald)
- Email invitation to take part in the survey to everyone on the LAF notification list held by Democratic Services
- Email from Buckinghamshire Association of Local Councils (BALC) to its members
- Briefing given to BALC Executive Board Meeting 18th May
- Community Impact Bucks e-news bulletin, website and blogs
- Additional email invites to take part in review to Parish Councils identified as having limited LAF engagement
- Email to Voluntary and Community Sector groups provided by Localities Team.
- Review updates included in BCC Member News
- Locality Managers have highlighted review at their LAFs

Evidence Session (public sessions unless stated otherwise)

		Invitees	Session Aims
9.45	Pre meet (private)		
10.10	Online Survey Results Summary	James Povey	Set context
10.30	BCC Leader	Martin Tett	View on LAF role now & in future Priority attached to them Appetite for them to take on more
11.00	BCC Cabinet Member Community Engagement	Martin Phillips	LAF aims and aspirations How successful are they Support needed and improvements required.
11.30	BCC Service Area – Communities & Built Environment BCC Service Areas – Corporate Policy, Adults & Family Wellbeing	John Lamb, Si Khan, Simon Dudley. Jackie Fisk, Marcia Smith	How use LAFs now Potential to use LAFs more in future, delegate more budget & decisions. Improvements required Officer culture to LAF/Localism LAFs at operational level
12.30	Lunch		
1.00	Afternoon pre meet (private)		
1.30	Police & NAGs	Tim De Meyer (TVP Partnership Superintendent), Emma Garside (A.Vale Neighbourhood	Police use and value attached to LAFs/NAGS LAF/NAG interaction & possible integration Improvements required Future roles LAFs & Police Commissioner

		Inspector).	
2.10	Health	Clare Blakeway-Phillips (PCT), Nicola Lester (Chiltern Clinical Commissioning Group Director)	Health sector use and value attached to LAFs. LAFs and role in health sector changes Future LAF roles & improvements required
2.50	Voluntary & Community Sector Representatives	Paul O'Hare (Community Impact Bucks), Richard Boyle (Action for Youth).	How LAFs used and perceived by VCS VCS suitably engaged & how improve if not. How should LAFs evolve to better meet VCS needs
3.30	BCC Localities Team Leader	Rebecca Carley	Views on messages gathered from previous sessions Potential for changes to LAF role and identified improvements. Work already planned to tackle some of issues identified Views on alternative methods / arrangements used at other Local Authorities.
4.00	Close		