

## **Purpose of Report.**

To inform Winslow LAF of the County Council RESOLUTION made on 10 July 2008 regarding the revised GC2C Strategy

Members of the LAF are asked to **note** this report and the agreed County Council recommendations (11) attached and, invited to **discuss** how the resolution items can be effectively used in this local area.

## **Background**

### **Local Committees**

1. In 2000 Buckingham County Council established 4 Local Committees, one for each District Area.

Initially these Committees focused on Transportation and environmental issues and replaced the former Road Safety Consultative groups.

Participants are County Councillors, District Councillors, Parish Councils and other partner bodies including some voluntary sector service providers.

Over the course of the last 8 years both Aylesbury Vale and South Bucks Local Committees have adopted a joint approach with County Council and District Council sharing agendas. Additionally other partners have placed items on agendas and promoted presentations and consultations at all 4 Local Committees.

2. Constitutionally the four Local Committees are advisory although the County Council has made an annual Capital sum of £125K per Local Committee available for local Transportation and environmental use. The committee role is to advise the Head of Transportation on appropriate schemes and projects and wherever possible suggestions/schedules of schemes have been accepted and work implemented. The budget responsibility has however, remained with the Head of Transportation.

### **Area Working (19 areas of Buckinghamshire)**

3. Over the last 2 years the localism agenda has developed both nationally and locally. The County Council, through its Getting Closer to Communities Programme has explored service delivery and participation in consultation at a more localised level. 19 areas have been identified for the County, 7 in Aylesbury Vale and 4 in each of Wycombe, Chiltern and South Bucks District Areas.

This area concept was included within the Pathfinder documents which formed part of the successful bid to Government, jointly submitted by the County Council and the 4 District Council partners.

5. For some time now a number of County Council members have held cluster group meetings with parishes in their divisions and found that this “sub-district” arrangement has helped develop a sense of local identity.

County Council members, holding these cluster meetings, have also included District colleagues and other public service providers. The Local Area Forum concept (see below) rationalises and formalises this sort of meeting.

## **Proposal**

### **Local Area Forums - Consultation and Development**

6. Earlier this year (2008) a consultation document "Buckinghamshire Locality Strategy" was widely circulated. This included a paper on establishing "Local Area Forums: A Framework for Consultation". The consultation sought views on a comprehensive partnership approach to local area working. The draft strategy has five, interlinked aims:

- Community Leadership
- Community Engagement
- Services that meet Community Need
- Local Access
- Joined Up Service Delivery

7. The proposals included the formal establishment of 19 Local Area Forums (building on existing forums) aligning to the 19 areas of the county. This concept accords with the Level 2 in Community Engagement work stream of Pathfinder and allows promotion of locality working countywide. The Forums would have a core Terms of Reference and some key functions, the clear expectations would be that they evolve to meet the different needs of the 19 local areas. The consultation document suggested that the 4 Local Committees would cease and 19 Local Area Forums develop during the next 12 months.

8. The County Council at its meeting on 10 July 2008 agreed the attached 11 recommendations.

9. In the Wycombe District Area the meetings will be known as Local Community Partnerships to reflect the pilot work of the Pathfinder Programme. (see 7 above).

## **Conclusion**

10. The decision to establish Local Area Forums builds on the success of the Local Committees and is a further evolution in locality working (cross LAF or whole District meeting is still be possible). It is recognised that we need to record and preserve the benefits that have come from the Local Committees, whilst embracing the additional benefits that a more local approach can bring. Clearly, Local Area Forums will need time to evolve and to establish a wider partnership base and the management of topics to other forums the LSPs, in particular, will need to be addressed.