

COMMUNITIES OF CHESHIRE PARTNERSHIP

12 September 2006



Report of the Cheshire LAA Group

Cheshire Local Area Agreement First Draft – Progress Report & Next Steps

Introduction

The purpose of this report is to update the Communities of Cheshire Partnership on progress made towards the production of the first full draft Cheshire Local Area Agreement since the submission of the draft LAA outcomes framework on 30 June 2006 and to reach agreement on the suggested next steps required to meet the 29 September 2006 deadline for submission of the draft LAA.

Summary

i) Feedback on the Outcomes Framework

- The draft LAA outcomes framework was submitted to Government Office for the North West (GONW) on 30 June 2006.
- Formal feedback was subsequently received from them on 14 July. Generally the outcomes framework was well received and it was recognised that the high level outcomes reflected the priorities for Cheshire and sat well with other related strategies and plans. GONW block leads were complimentary about the progress made within each of the blocks, noting that the submission did not reflect the extent of the underpinning work. It was noted that further clarity was needed over leadership of the Economic Development & Enterprise block though this issue has since been resolved. It was also suggested that environmental and rural issues be integrated within the four core LAA blocks.
- Following receipt of the formal feedback, GONW requested a meeting between their block leads and appropriate CCC block lead officers, as the Accountable Body for the LAA, to discuss ongoing progress and issues arising. This meeting was held on 18 August 2006 (minutes attached). A further liaison meeting will take place on 15 September 2006.

ii) LAA Block Development

- A tremendous amount of work has continued behind the scenes within and across each of the blocks to develop the first draft LAA by the end of September with a number of writing / working groups meeting over the summer to build up the detail underpinning the outcomes framework.

- This has included the formulation of an additional outcome under the Economic Development & Enterprise block in relation to worklessness.
- Each block has been asked to populate a standard template to include sub outcomes, activities to be undertaken, baselines, targets, funding details, etc and this information is currently being amalgamated under each of the high level outcomes. This document will help identify overlaps as well as contributory activity from each block to the cross cutting themes and will be shared with partners at the meeting.
- In addition, officers have been asked to submit a brief contextual statement for each block to support and evidence the agreed outcomes, sub outcomes and proposed activities to be undertaken within the LAA.
- A cross-agency Finance Officers Group to explore and agree protocols for dealing with the financial aspects of the LAA is under development.
- A GONW Integrated Appraisal Toolkit will be used to measure and challenge the positive and any potentially negative impact of the Agreement. Additional GONW officer support may be available to implement this activity. It is also proposed, time permitting, to undertake a Peer Challenge of the Agreement through the Partnership.
- The inaugural meeting of the new Governance Board to the Cheshire Partnerships Framework is due to be held on 22 September 2006. The Governance Board will bring together the key public agencies to provide a strategic focus and vision for the delivery of joined-up public services in Cheshire and take overall collective accountability. This will include responsibility for the governance and delivery of the LAA.
- The five Cheshire-wide thematic partnership Chairmen will be invited to comment on the development of their respective blocks at the meeting.

iii) Performance Management

- In addition to the above, the draft Agreement must include an explanation of proposed arrangements for performance management, reporting and monitoring. This work is being progressed through the multi-agency Cheshire Performance Management Practitioners Group.
- A half day Performance Management Workshop to begin work towards the development of a Performance Management Framework (PMF) for the LAA was held on Tuesday 8 August. The workshop, facilitated by the Cheshire Performance Management Practitioners Group, provided an opportunity for those involved in developing the LAA blocks to share performance management experiences, examine what may or may not work within a Cheshire LAA PMF context and devise a workable PMF solution for the Cheshire LAA that all partners can comfortably operate within. The workshop also received a presentation from Lancashire County Council in relation to the development of the Lancashire LAA PMF.
- One of the outcomes from the workshop was the development of guidance on defining outcomes, sub-outcomes, baselines, performance measures and targets for the Cheshire LAA. This was circulated to the Cheshire-wide thematic partnership support officers on 29 August.

- CCC will produce a draft PMF on behalf of the Cheshire Performance Management Practitioners Group for inclusion in the draft Agreement by the end of the month.
- The Group have also suggested that each Cheshire-wide thematic partnership be allocated a member of the Group to work alongside them in developing the content of their block in relation to performance management requirements. The views of Partnership are invited on this proposal.
- It has been agreed, in principle, to use of the County Council's ICT-based performance management system (Excelcis) for performance reporting of the LAA though further work will be undertaken over the autumn to confirm its suitability as the basis for the LAA PMF.

iv) Statement of Community Involvement

- The draft LAA needs to include a Statement of Community Involvement explaining how the voluntary, community and faith sectors have been involved in the development of the LAA and will be involved in its delivery.
- With the support of GONW, a Neighbourhood Renewal Adviser (Martin Honeywell) is working under the direction of the LAA Group to progress this aspect of the Agreement.
- To date, contact has been established with key VCS organisations across Cheshire, including those involved directly in LSP activity a district level.
- A first draft SCI capturing the existing work, relationships and practice of multi-agency work across Cheshire has been produced though this will be refined over the coming weeks in consultation and collaboration with voluntary and community sector representatives.
- A stakeholder event is also planned for early October to consider the ongoing development of the voluntary and community sector in Cheshire and its evolving role in service delivery.

Next Steps

Whilst significant progress has been made, there remains much to be done prior to submission of the first full draft LAA by the end of the month including clarification of the partner / partnership process for approving the document prior to submission.

Recommendations

That the Communities of Cheshire Partnership:

- (i) note the contents of this progress report;
- (ii) comment upon the content of the draft Agreement as developed to date;
- (iii) agree, if appropriate, the inclusion of an additional high level outcome in relation to worklessness under the Economic Development & Enterprise block;
- (iv) consider the cross-cutting aspects of the Agreement and identify where ownership of and accountability for these outcomes should sit;
- (v) consider and agree a response to the proposal of the Cheshire Performance Management Practitioners Group in relation to a named

- 'performance specialist' to support each of the Cheshire-wide thematic groups;
- (vi) agree to the formation of a sub-group of the Communities of Cheshire Partnership to meet immediately prior to the submission of the draft Agreement to agree and endorse its content as the basis for the negotiation stage.

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