NORTHAMPTON
B O R O U G H C O U N C I L

Name of Committee	**Item No.**
COUNCIL **23 January 2006**	

Report of Directorate: **Citizens, Governance and Finance** Author/Contact Officer: Thomas Hall ext 7593	**Local Area Agreement**

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to update and inform the Council on latest developments on the Local Area Agreement (LAA) for Northamptonshire, to propose modifications to the proposals relating to governance of the agreement, and to propose a process for signing off the final agreement.

Recommendations

The Improvement Board is recommended to:
  i)   note the contents of this report;
  ii)   request that this Council's representation on the Strategic Board for the LAA be increased from one to two Councillors;
  iii)   request that Councillors be represented on each of the 'block' boards;
  iv)   nominate a representative for the shadow Strategic Board; and
  v)   agree that the delegated authority to agree the final proposals be given to the Improvement Board, meeting on 16 February.

Summary and Links to Recovery Plan

This paper sets out the latest position regarding the Local Area Agreement. In particular, it describes:
  • the outcomes and indicators, in summary, which will form the basis of the agreement,
  • proposed arrangements for governance,
  • the timetable for achieving agreement, and
  approaches to the alignment of funding and implementation

Improving partnership working is a key element of this Council's Recovery Plan, and

the Local Area Agreement is potentially the single most significant vehicle for achieving this.

Outcomes and Indicators

The Local Area Agreement (LAA) is essentially about improved outcomes for local people, and these outcomes and associated performance indicators are the heart of the proposed agreement. Starting from the seven existing community strategies in the county, a complex process of discussion has lead to the following outcomes for the four LAA 'blocks' (but still subject to further refinement):

Safer and Stronger Communities –
1   To significantly improve the quality of life for people living in the most disadvantaged (rural and urban) areas by developing and implementing neighbourhood approaches through the neighbourhood renewal strategy target areas
2   To reduce crime, increase public confidence and reduce the fear of crime, reduce the harm of drug, substance and alcohol abuse and reduce the impact of anti-social behaviour
3   To reduce the number of accidents
4   To strengthen communities by supporting development of the Voluntary and Community Sector, giving people a greater voice and influence over decision making and developing cohesive communities
5   To create cleaner, safer and greener communities

Economic Development, Enterprise and Growth –
1   To increase skill levels in the labour market to ensure that labour supply is inclusive and meets the needs of the county's employers both now and in the future
2   To promote growth in the number of enterprises in Northamptonshire, with a specific focus on knowledge economy employers, and maximise the benefits of their growth all, but particularly for excluded communities
3   To increase the affordability, supply, quality and condition of housing in Northamptonshire
4   To increase the accessibility of communities to meet their needs and maximise their opportunities

Children and Young People -
1   To ensure children and young people achieve healthy life-styles by avoiding obesity, substance misuse and unplanned teenage pregnancy
2   To ensure children and young people enjoy improved mental health through high quality services
3   To provide a safe environment for children and young people by better multi-agency services supporting families
4   To improve the life-chances for a) children with disabilities b) looked after children
5   To improve educational attainment and enjoyment (including increased access to recreation and leisure)
6   To improve attendance, raise levels of behaviour and reduce incidences of bullying
7   To overcome social, accommodation and economic disadvantage for children and young people through collaborative service approaches
8   To increase the proportion of young people accessing education, employment, training or volunteering post-16
9   To increase opportunities for children and young people to influence the way services are provided
10   To reduce the number of children and young people affected by offending and victimisation

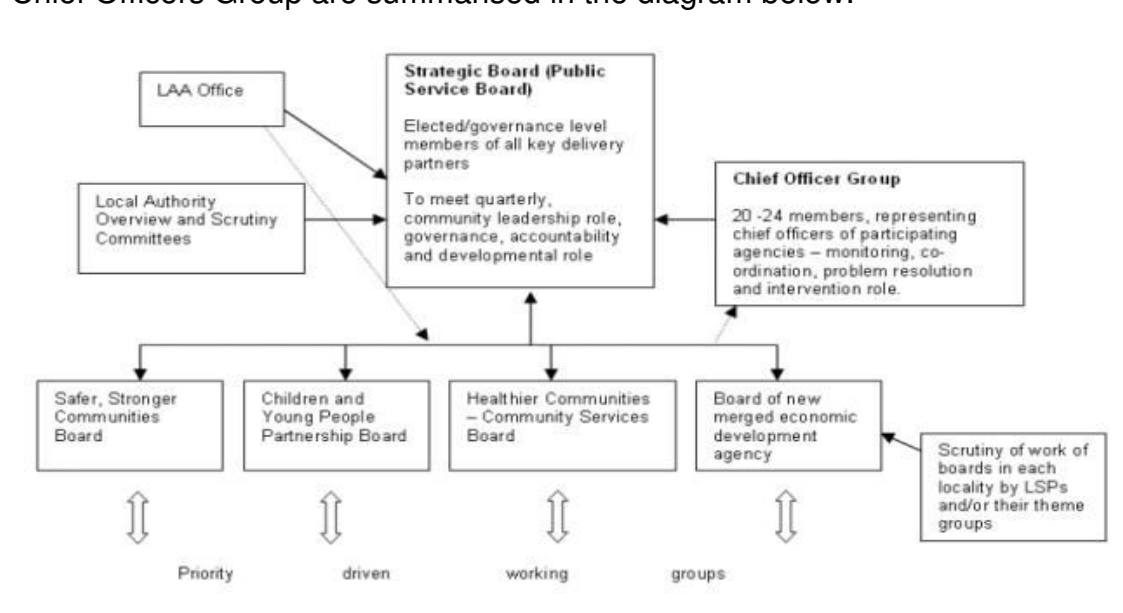**Healthier Communities and Older People**
1   Supporting independent living for Older People

2	Increasing the quality of life and reducing social isolation for Older People
3	Reducing health inequalities for the population of Northamptonshire
4	Improving the health of the population of Northamptonshire
5	Reduce poverty and the effects of poverty in Northamptonshire by supporting people to maximise their income through benefits and debt management

These, together with the corresponding proposed performance indicators, are attached as *Appendix 1*.

Governance

The governance arrangements for the LAA proposed by the existing LAA Chief Officers Group are summarised in the diagram below:

The principle has been to create as few new bodies as possible, dividing strategy/prioritising from performance/delivery, and using existing local structures for scrutiny.

Proposed membership of the Strategic Board is attached as *Appendix 2*. Northampton Borough Council, despite its size and pivotal role in the development of the county, is only allocated one seat under these proposals. There is a clear danger that the interests of Northampton's citizens will therefore not weigh as heavily as they should in decisions. It is therefore proposed that the LAA Chief Officers' Group be asked to increase this representation to two Councillors from this Council.

The 'block' boards (eg Safer, Stronger Communities Board) do not currently include Councillor representatives or equivalent. These will be the places where most of the delivery will be managed. The lack of elected members in such discussions appears to create a worrying gap in accountability. Therefore it is proposed that the Chief Officers' Group be asked to reconsider the composition of these boards, to allow at least some Councillor membership.

This Council is being invited to nominate a Councillor to sit on the 'shadow' Strategic Board, which is due to meet for the first time on 2 February, followed by a second meeting on 20 February. These dates are aligned to the timetable for submission of the draft and final LAA to GOEM (see below). The shadow Board will need to review the development of, and finally sign off, the LAA.

Timetable for Participation and Agreement

The Local Area Agreement (LAA) final proposal must be submitted to the Government Office for the East Midlands (GOEM) by 21 February, for GOEM to forward with their comments to the ODPM by 24 February. Working back, a draft (the third main draft) will be submitted to GOEM on the 3 February for final comments and advice.

Following the recent change to the meeting calendar, there will not now be a meeting of the full Council between today's meeting and 27 February. Clearly the latter is too late to endorse the LAA, while the definitive draft is not yet available. As a pragmatic solution it is therefore proposed that delegated authority to agree the final proposals be given to the Improvement Board, meeting on 16 February.

The third and final 'wider partnership event' will be taking place on the morning of 10 February at Rushden and Diamonds' ground, Irthlingborough. This will not be a decision-making event but, like its predecessor on 2 December 2005, will provide an opportunity for participation and discussion. Invitations will be sent out shortly.

Funding Alignment

All participating partners need to show how their resources, particularly their core funding, will contribute to the LAA outcomes. At this early stage the expectation is that this Council will be able to demonstrate an alignment between its budgets and the 24 outcomes, and senior staff have been meeting with the LAA team to deliver this. At a later date the Council may be expected to indicate its budget allocation to individual indicators. The 'pooling' of budgets by the various authorities is still some way off, and it has been recognised that this would require the kind of mutual confidence which will grow over time.

Assuming that the LAA is agreed, it will need to become embedded in service planning throughout the Council.

Financial Implications

The LAA is intended to simplify funding streams and, through the achievement of agreed 'stretch' targets, to secure additional funds for local services. The implementation of the Agreement should result in the realignment of budgets towards the agreed outcomes, rather than additional expenditure. Effective

partnership working offers the prospect of efficiency savings in the future, but these cannot be quantified at this point.

Social Impact

LAA outcomes are specifically targeted at addressing the problems of the most deprived communities and reducing inequalities, while improving quality of life for everyone. More 'joined up' services between partners will improve accessibility and efficiency of service delivery to those who need it most.

Conclusions

The Local Area Agreement has enormous potential to improve service delivery from agencies working together. It has however been developed at great speed, and in particular opportunities for democratic accountability have not been as great as is desirable. The recommendations of this report represent a pragmatic approach to engaging this Council in the process and seeking some significant improvements in its governance.

Consultees

The principal means of consultation through the development of the LAA has been a series of 'partnership events' to which Councillors, key staff and representatives of many agencies have been invited.

Background Papers

Northamptonshire Local Area Agreement – 2nd submission to GOEM (2 December 2005)
Minutes of LAA Chief Officer Group

Appendix 1

Outcomes and Indicators (draft 17 January 2006)

SAFER AND STRONGER COMMUNITIES

SSC 1 : To significantly improve the quality of life for people living in the most disadvantaged (rural and urban) areas by developing and implementing neighbourhood approaches through the neighbourhood renewal strategy target areas

A. To reduce the numbers of Super Output Areas in the 20% most deprived in the country (improved position on all domains and individual domains)
B. Numbers of Neighbourhood Renewal areas with action plans, and local coordination boards evidencing significant community involvement and leadership – Includes rural neighbourhood renewal areas
C. Percentage of residents satisfied with the delivery of local services (including; ability to influence services, satisfaction with neighbourhood, satisfaction with environment and feeling that facilities have improved)

SSC 2 : To reduce crime, increase public confidence and reduce the fear of crime, reduce the harm of drug, substance and alcohol abuse and reduce the impact of anti-social behaviour

A. Reduce crime & reduce the gap between the highest crime 'Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership' areas and the best comparable areas (Northampton and Corby) - Reduction in all crime levels in most disadvantaged SOAs in Corby, Northampton, Wellingborough and Kettering for: violent crimes (town centre violence, alcohol related crime and domestic abuse), deliberately started fires, reducing number of priority and prolific offenders
B. Reduce the fear of crime and the impact of anti-social behaviour

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SSC 3 : To reduce the number of accidents

A. Deaths from avoidable injury
B. (Emergency) Hospital admissions for accidental injuries in; i) children aged 0-4 years and ii) adults aged 65 years or more
C. All killed or seriously injured casualties; i) Children and ii) Drivers aged between 18 and 24 years
D. The number of deaths arising from accidental fires in dwellings per 100,000 population
E. Deaths and serious injury from accidents in the workplace/ Number of accidents in the workplace

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SSC 4 : To strengthen communities by supporting development of the Voluntary and Community Sector, giving people a greater voice and influence over decision making and developing cohesive communities

A. % of adults who feel that they can influence decisions affecting their local areas
B. % of residents who feel that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds can get on well together
C. % of residents who affirm that they carried out voluntary work in an organisation once a month or more in the past year.
D. % of VCS groups and organisations affirming growth in activity in the past year in terms of financial turnover
E. Increase in the number of voluntary organisations receiving support who express satisfaction with the support received
F. Proportion of services in selected public service areas delivered by VCS organisations on behalf of the local authority

SSC 5 : To create cleaner, safer and greener communities

A. Increase in take up rate of household waste recycling in target areas and percentage of people happy with recycling facilities or services
B. Improvement in the cleanliness of the neighbourhood and percentage of the area falling short of a tolerable standard
C. Increase choice of green space accessible to growth areas in Northamptonshire by the establishment of a strategic Green Infrastructure. Should incorporate a specific increase in the percentage of the county which is designated as a County Wildlife Site
D. Making communities and environments safer by ensuring targeted existing and new developments are subject to planning out crime criteria (i.e. percentage of new housing that meets the 'secured by design' certification criteria)

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, ENTERPRISE AND GROWTH

EDEG 1 : To increase skill levels in the labour market to ensure that labour supply is
inclusive and meets the needs of the county's employers both now and in the future

A. Increase the proportion of people with qualifications at Level 2 and above, with a particular focus on Corby
B. Increase the proportion of people of working age population with qualifications at Level 4 and above
(degree equivalent), with a particular focus on Corby and Wellingborough
C. Address barriers to the labour market, through (i) reducing the number of people on incapacity benefits,
particularly in Corby (ii) maintaining employment rate of older workers (aged 50-64) despite an aging
demographic

EDEG 2 : To promote growth in the number of enterprises in Northamptonshire, with
a specific focus on knowledge economy employers, and maximise the benefits of
their growth all, but particularly for excluded communities

A. Increase the proportion of people employed in management and professional occupations
B. Strengthen Northamptonshire's base of 'creative industry' enterprise activity (as defined by Creative
Connections): (i) Proportion of all creative businesses in East Midlands based in Northamptonshire (ii)
Proportion of all Northamptonshire employees employed in creative industries sector

EDEG 3 : To increase the affordability, supply, quality and condition of housing in
Northamptonshire

A. Level of affordable housing delivered: Proportion of all housing completed that is social housing
B. Increase and extend capacity to manage a robust and responsive planning process by increasing the
amount of Planning Delivery Grant for Northamptonshire local authorities

EDEG 4 : To increase the accessibility of communities to meet their needs and
maximise their opportunities

A. Increase accessibility to health provision, with a particular focus on disadvantaged rural wards: % of
Kettering and other households with access within 60 minutes to: (i)General Hospitals (ii) General and
Community Hospitals (iii) % of households with access to GPs within 15 minutes
B. Increase the proportion of settlements under 3,000 inhabitants receiving a twice daily or better bus service
C. Increase the proportion of settlements over 3,000 inhabitants receiving an hourly or better bus service
D. Increase take-up of sports facilities through improving access. Population within 20 minutes walk of either
a pool, sports hall or health & fitness centre
E. Increase access to rural village services by reducing the closure rate of rural shops through provision of
business advice/support to rural retail businesses, built upon the South Northamptonshire DC model

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

CYP 1 : To ensure children and young people achieve healthy life-styles by avoiding obesity, substance misuse and unplanned teenage pregnancy

A. Reduction in the number of Year 11 students in Northamptonshire reporting getting drunk in the last year and month as compared to students elsewhere
B. Reduction in the number of students reporting that their first experience of sexual intercourse was as a result of the influence of alcohol.
C. Number of secondary schools in Northamptonshire achieving the Personal Social and Health Education element of National Healthy Schools Status.   (NB: This element includes Sex & Relationship Education and drug education which includes alcohol, tobacco & volatile substance abuse education)

CYP 2 : To ensure children and young people enjoy improved mental health through high quality services

A. Children and young people able to access a comprehensive children's and adolescent mental health service, in particular:-
Indicator 1
24 hour access to local crisis and home intervention services at tiers 3 and 4
• Reduced number of inpatient admissions
• Reduced length of inpatient stay
• Number of home treatment packages delivered
Indicator 2
Improve capability of practitioners providing universal services (tier 1)
• Expansion and co-ordination of multi-agency training

CYP 3 : To provide a safe environment for children and young people by better multi-agency services supporting families

A. Percentage referrals to Children's Services that are re-referrals APA
B. Decrease in the number of children re-registered onto Child Protection Register
C. Reduce no. of young people as victims of criminal offences committed by young people

CYP 4 : To improve the life-chances for a) children with disabilities b) looked after children

A. Improve KS results for children with SEN. Reduce numbers *not* achieving
B. School attendance of Looked After Children
C. Improve GCSE attainment of young people looked after. No. with at least 1 GCSE in year

CYP 5 : To improve educational attainment and enjoyment (including increased access to recreation and leisure)

A. Improved attainment at KS4
B. Improved attainment at KS4: Black Caribbean & Bangladeshi pupils: Wellingborough & Northampton

CYP 6 : To improve attendance, raise levels of behaviour and reduce incidences of bullying

A. Absence rates in: Primary Schools, Secondary Schools, Combined
B. Reported incidences of bullying; Years 5-6 and Years 7-9 (or racial harassment)
C. Develop ASB strategy to maintain low levels of anti-social behaviour and no. of young people subject to an ASBO

CYP 7 : To overcome social, accommodation and economic disadvantage for children and young people through collaborative service approaches

A. % of schools able to offer year-round access to child care
B. No. of young people accepted as homeless and % of supported accommodation packages that result in a successful outcome KPI 1 and 2, Supporting People. Increase number of places in suitable accommodation available to young people living independently

CYP 8 : To increase the proportion of young people accessing education, employment, training or volunteering post-16

A. Proportion of 16-18s not in employment, education or training (EET) in Northampton and the rest of county
B. Increase year 11 positive progression – (i.e. has a learning offer at 1 July)

CYP 9 : To increase opportunities for children and young people to influence the way services are provided

A. % schools that have an elected school Council and % Schools Councils meeting standards set through Youth involvement Conference
B. Increased involvement in individual service reviews: a) LAC b) SEN

CYP 10 : To reduce the number of children and young people affected by offending and victimisation

A. Reduce proportion of first time entrants to criminal justice system
B. Repeat offences during year by young people finishing community orders / leaving custody
C. Offending by looked after children

HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES AND OLDER PEOPLE

HCOP 1 : Supporting independent living for Older People

A Increase in the number of people aged 65 and over helped to live at home through improving
• The number of people receiving Intensive Home Care
• The number of older people helped to live at home by Primary Care Trusts through the provision of community based services
• The percentage of items of equipment or adaptations delivered within 7 working days by Northamptonshire County Council
• The percentage of items of equipment or adaptations delivered within 7 working days by Primary Care Trusts
• And reducing the number of people over 65 treated for neck of femur fractures at KGH and NGH
B. Increasing the availability of Assistive Technology

HCOP 2 : Increasing the quality of life and reducing social isolation for Older People

A. Increasing the quality of life for people over 65 in the key domains of independence
B. Increasing employment opportunities for older people

HCOP 3 : Reducing health inequalities for the population of Northamptonshire

A. To make Northamptonshire smoke free by 2009 through
•   Extension of the Northamptonshire Smoke free Charter to cover all enclosed public places
•   Increase the number of people giving up smoking (Primary Care Trust Target measured at 4 weeks)
•   Increasing the number of manual workers giving up smoking (Primary Care Trust target)
•   Reducing the level of underage sales of tobacco (Trading Standards target)
B. Reduce Infant Mortality by 10% by 2010 by
•   Increasing the number of mothers who initiate breast feeding (Primary Care Trust target)
•   Increasing the number of mothers who continue breast feeding after 6 weeks (Primary Care Trust target)
•   Reducing the number of mothers who smoke in pregnancy (Primary Care Trust target)

HCOP 4 : Improving the health of the population of Northamptonshire

A. To halt the year on year in obesity in children under 11 by 2010 (from 02 – 04 baseline) in the context of a broader strategy to tackle obesity in the population as a whole by
•   Reducing obesity in children
•   Reducing obesity in adults
•   100% schools meeting the Health Schools Award status by 2009
B. Improve Sexual Health by
•   Reducing the number of cases of sexually transmitted diseases
•   Extending the Chlamydia Screening Programme
C. Improve access to information through
•   The development (by Northampton Primary Care Trust) and distribution of the Self Care Handbook
•   The development of Lifestyle Advisors/Health Trainers by Primary Care Trusts
•   Mrs Barker Project to connect information and access points of statutory agencies

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HCOP 5 : Reduce poverty and the effects of poverty in Northamptonshire by supporting people to maximise their income through benefits and debt management

A. Improving access to debt management
• Council Tax Credit claims
• Debt management advice
B. Reduce Pensioner Poverty
• Pension Credit claims

• Attendance Allowance claims
C. Ensure the best start for all children and end child poverty by 2020
• Increasing the proportion of parents with care on Income Support and income-based Jobseeker's Allowance who receive maintenance for their children to 65 per cent by March 2008.

Appendix 2

Strategic Board
Proposed Membership

This should comprise
- two elected members from NCC
- one elected member from each Borough/District
- one elected member of the Police Authority
- an appointee representing the voluntary sector – appointed by the County wide Voluntary Sector Network
- one appointee from each of the four block management bodies as follows:-
  o a criminal justice sector appointee chosen by the Safer and Stronger Communities Board
  o a further education/skills sector appointee chosen by the Children and Young People Board
  o a Health Sector appointee chosen by the HCOP Board
  o a private sector appointee chosen by the new merged economic development agency for the county.

TOTAL 15 (10 elected members)