

BUSINESS SUPPORT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

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LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT 2008 – 2011 (LAA2) PROGRESS ON PERFORMANCE

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Summary

This report seeks to inform Members of Business Support Overview & Scrutiny Committee of the performance against Medway's second local area agreement (LAA2) at the end of the first year of the agreement (2008/9) and where available for first quarter 09/10. In addition, the report updates Members on the actions, which the Local Strategic Partnership has taken to date to strengthen the focus on ensuring effective outcomes and impact in relation to activities required to deliver the LAA2.

1. Budget and Policy Framework

- 1.1 The priorities for the local area agreement (LAA) flow from and are consistent with Medway's community plan, adopted as part of the policy framework in November 2006.
- 1.2 The full Council formally approved the 'refreshed' LAA 2008 – 2011, including specific target levels to be achieved by March 2009. This is attached at appendix 1 for Members' reference.

2. Background

- 2.1 In line with published guidance a formal Annual Review / Refresh of the LAA was carried out between November 2008 and March 2009. The council and stakeholder organisations involved in the Local Strategic Partnership carried out the annual performance review and refresh. Business Support Overview and Scrutiny Committee received formal reports during this process. The full Council endorsed the refreshed LAA2 on 25 March 2009 and approval was subsequently received by the Secretary of State.
- 2.2 The Local Strategic Partnership Board has now turned its efforts to directing a strong focus on delivery of LAA targets and has emphasised that it wants to make joint working between statutory sector bodies, businesses, voluntary and community organisations as effective and

efficient as possible. Partnership working must add measurable and sustained benefits to the efforts of the stakeholder organisations in the area.

- 2.3 The LSP Board has agreed to undertake a *detailed* review of progress against all the LAA indicators at *two* of its meetings, in May and November each year. A review carried out in May, will enable an assessment of progress over a full year, and in November will provide opportunity to examine issues which need to be reflected in the annual performance review and formal refresh of the LAA and will be timely, in terms of reflecting on the outcome of the new Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA).
- 2.4 At the meeting on 3 February 2009 Business Support Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed, in line with their responsibilities to scrutinise LAA delivery and the effectiveness of partnership working, to receive update reports twice a year on all LAA targets, beginning with this July/August cycle of meetings. Progress monitoring on those LAA targets for which the council is lead agency are included in the quarterly council plan monitoring reports submitted to overview and scrutiny committee.

3. LAA Performance Review

- 3.1 The LSP Board reviewed LAA performance at its meeting on 19 May 2009 and considered a report including a spreadsheet reflecting a Red, Amber, Green (RAG) rating for each of the LAA targets.
- 3.2 Officers reported to the LSP Board on a number of issues and challenges relating to the availability of data which would impact on the review of progress:
- Timeliness of data
 - time lag in reported information, eg data on under 18 conception rates refers to 2006 / 2007 figures
 - LAA Target Data not available at the same time, e.g.
 - academic year for *education attainment targets*
 - calendar year for NI 8 *participation in sport*
 - quarterly data for NI 113 *Chlamydia screening*
- 3.3 The LSP Board was advised that the development of proxy measures to allow accurate forecasting of performance over time had been recommended for inclusion into the LAA Target Delivery Action Plans which would be routinely updated and monitored through arrangements determined by each of the lead thematic partnerships.

- 3.4 The LSP Board asked officers to address the following issues which would help ensure it discharges its performance monitoring role more effectively and which in turn will aid overview and scrutiny committees in their task:
- ‘plain language’ description of each of the LAA target definition
 - the relevant baseline year and data source for each target
 - indication of whether *higher* or *lower* reported figures was better
 - more subtle assessment of RAG ratings to understand projected out-turn, rather than a measure of performance against target at this point
 - for reporting against Red rated targets to offer high degree of assurance to the Board over the *level of ‘risk’ to meeting the target* and for officers to highlight actions being taken / likelihood of success in ‘turning the curve’ towards improved performance, or intervention required from Board members
 - The Chairs of the main thematic partnerships to provide a highlight report about *red rated* indicators that identifies any special measures being taken to future LSP board meetings
- 3.5 An updated LAA Performance Report showing RAG ratings is attached as **Appendix 1** for Members’ information.
- 3.6 Medway LAA has **35** designated targets (and 10 statutory education and early years targets)

Priority	Red	Amber	Green	N/A
Children / young people and families	3	1	2	0
Health, well-being and older people	2	2	5	0
Safe and Strong Medway	0	3	3	3
Economic development, transport and skills	0	1	2	3
Regeneration, including housing, environment and culture	0	0	4	1
DCSF statutory indicators (all under theme of children, young people and families)	7	0	3	0
Totals	12	7	19	7
	26.7%	15.6%	42.2%	15.6%

- 19 are on track to meet or exceed the levels of ambition as agreed in the signed LAA (rated green)
- 7 are currently off trajectory, but are expected to improve over the period and to meet expectation (rated amber)
- 12 are at risk of missing agreed levels of ambition (rated red) and are subject to detailed improvement planning.
- 7 have no data yet on which to evidence progress.

- 3.7 Arrangements are in place for the Thematic Partnerships to monitor progress against delivery and report outcomes to the LSP Board on an exception basis – to enable further strategic effort to be applied where targets are at risk of being ‘off track’ and where corrective measures may still not be sufficient to ‘turn the curve’ towards the required trajectory. Overview and Scrutiny Committees may wish to request a presentation of these improvement plans for selected ‘red rated’ targets at future meetings.

4. Supporting LAA Delivery

- 4.1 The following events have been held and activities carried out since the approval of the refreshed LAA2 in March, to encourage a focus on delivery and impact:

- LAA Delivery Workshop 13 May 2009
 - colleagues from a variety of organisations and sectors, working towards meeting the LAA ambitions
 - workshop discussions on the five main priority themes of the Local Area Agreement led by the Lead Officer responsible for co-ordinating the work being carried out within each of the theme areas
 - updates on progress on LAA implementation to date and sharing plans for future activity
 - presentations on practical opportunities for working together on LAA Indicators

- Performance in Partnership Seminar 29 June
 - To secure agreement on arrangements for managing performance against jointly agreed priorities
 - To agree a process for co-ordinating reporting and analysis of performance information which will enable the LSP to discharge its collective responsibilities for agreed outcomes
 - To provide an opportunity for leading performance specialists to share information about organisational responsibilities and to begin to build a network of leading performance officers

- LAA ‘Delivery Advice’ Drop In Sessions June, July and August 2009

- New LAA2 Page on the council website where you can view the LAA target Delivery Action Plans
(<http://www.medway.gov.uk/index/council/policy/laa.htm>)

- Pursued External Funding opportunities which assist a range of local partners in undertaking activities which support LAA Delivery - directly and indirectly, including:
 - Empowerment Fund to support LAA Target NI 4 - % of people who can influence decisions in their locality
 - Migration Impact Fund
 - Future Jobs Fund
 - LAA Exemplar Projects

5. Communicating the LAA

5.1 Medway Matters magazine continues to publish an ongoing series of 'specials' on the targets included in LAA2. The aim is to make the LAA targets relevant to the public, to explain them in simple terms and to demonstrate how they will make (or have made) a real difference to the lives of people in Medway. The text around these targets is user-focussed and uses everyday language that people understand. This has generated some interest from members on the public in the priority issues highlighted in LAA2, with emails and telephone calls in response to the following LAA targets:

- Under 18 conception rates (NI 112)
- Adult Participation in sport (NI 8)
- Reducing Smoking (NI 123)
- Young offenders re-offending (NI 19)
- Support for people with a long term condition to retain independence / control (NI 141)
- Access to services and facilities by walking, cycling and public transport (NI 175)

5.2 A communications specialist is also working with those who are heading up the LAA target areas to raise their awareness of their responsibility for demonstrating the difference their work is making. It has been emphasised to those in charge of achieving the targets that vague aspirations will not be allowed to replace definitive actions. The support they have been given includes:

- giving them a route by which they can demonstrate what difference each individual target will make (and, in time, has made – with emphasis on 'real life' differences and case studies)
- helping them clarify what they are aiming to achieve and explain their work in simple terms
- providing ways of publicising their work both online and in print

5.3 The suggestion is that each target should be designed into an individual fact sheet, which can then be used in a number of ways, depending on demand, budget and opportunity to increase public, partner and staff awareness of our LAA aims, improvements achieved and how they can get involved:

- Individual fact sheets could be produced either on demand or for distribution via the various partners' outlets or publications
- The fact sheets could be reproduced within partners' publications in the way that some have been printed within *Medway Matters*
- Fact sheets could, if necessary, be compiled into a ring binder for anyone (partners, for instance) who wanted a complete set of 'plain English' targets
- PDF versions of the fact sheets could be included on LSP partner websites

6. Scrutiny of LAA2 – LSP Response Overview & Scrutiny Committee Actions February 2009

6.1 Business Support Overview & Scrutiny Committee (OSC) considered the outcomes of the development sessions involving the LSP and OSC members at its meeting on 3 February 2009, and approved five actions in relation to determining a way forward for exercising new powers for scrutiny and challenge of the LAA.

6.2 Progress on each action is given below:

- Action 1: **The purpose of OSCs and their work programmes should be reviewed and their focus sharpened to create capacity for scrutiny of the LAA.** OSCs have reviewed their work programmes and task group allocations and now receive as part of all reports, an assessment of the impact on and implications for LAA targets. In light of the LAA progress report included here, OSCs may wish to consider the attention they wish to give to LAA targets, particularly those rated 'red' as part of regular work programme review.
- Action 2 – **There must be early and timely engagement by the LSP and partners with OSCs.** The LSP is giving consideration to how OSCs might assist where delivery is not on track. Two Thematic Partnerships (the Children's Trust Board and Community Safety Partnership) have identified a 'link person' for the relevant OSC. The 2009 refresh will take place from November onwards – OSCs will be actively involved in that process.
- Action 3 – **Performance monitoring information must be accurate and early for meaningful OSC engagement.** Delivery plans for all LAA targets are now available electronically for Overview and Scrutiny Members. These give quarterly updates on progress. Protocols have been agreed with partners to ensure the timely flow of information.
- Action 4: - **For meaningful engagement OSCs should scope and prepare questions ahead of inviting partners to meetings and where possible give advance notice of questions** and Action 5: - **Protocols should be developed to ensure there are clear ground rules for OSC engagement with partner organisations** – these actions are being progressed.

7. Risk Analysis

7.1 Section 3.4 of this report outlines the additional measures which the LSP Board has asked to have incorporated into the arrangements for review of the LAA which will help it determine the risks to delivery. In addition, each of the LAA indicator Delivery Plans highlight anticipated or actual risks and set out actions to mitigate these. Routine updates of the Delivery Action Plans includes a re-assessment of risks.

8. Consultation

- 8.1 The Local Strategic Partnership Board has made a full assessment of progress to date towards meeting LAA2 targets which has involved consultation through the LSP Operational Group which draws its membership from the main thematic partnerships.

9. Financial and legal implications

- 9.1 Overview and Scrutiny Committees now have a power to require information from certain partner and associated authorities. The aim of the new legislation is to strengthen the role of Overview and Scrutiny Committees to enable them to call for information they may reasonably require for both the purposes of examining progress on any LAA target with which a partner is concerned and of undertaking studies of local issues connected to such a LAA target.
- 9.2 There are no direct financial implications arising out of this report. Activities and programmes to implement the refreshed LAA2 will be undertaken within the current financial arrangements of the council. In addition, opportunities for external funding have been explored and are ongoing to assist activities and interventions required involving cooperation between various LSP partners and the council.

10. Recommendations

- 10.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is being asked to formally consider the progress made to date by:
- Reviewing the information on progress towards achieving targets

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Background papers

LAA2 2008 –2011 Annual Performance Report
GO Network LAA Annual Review Report : 2008/2009
LSP Board Meeting Papers and Reports March 2009, May 2009 and July 2009.