

SCRUTINY COMMISSION - 1st SEPTEMBER 2004

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES

**PROGRESS ON IMPLEMENTING LEICESTERSHIRE'S LOCAL
PUBLIC SERVICE AGREEMENT (LPSA)**

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The Scrutiny Reference Group has requested a report on progress on the LPSA. The attached report sets out the background to the Agreement and describes the current position against each of the PSA targets.

BACKGROUND

2. Leicestershire's Local Public Service Agreement (LPSA) is a commitment to deliver improved services in 12 priority areas by 2006. An agreement was entered into with the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister in 2003 that requires the County Council and its partners to achieve "stretched" targets over three years above the level we would otherwise plan to achieve. The County Council's part of these targets is included as part of the Council's Medium Term Corporate Strategy priorities.
3. The partners to the agreement are Leicestershire County Council, all Leicestershire's Borough and District Councils, Leicestershire Constabulary, Charnwood and North-West Leicestershire PCT and Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust.
4. A one off "pump priming" grant of £1.4m. was received in 2003/04 and has been shared with partners
5. If all twelve of the LPSA targets are met in full, an additional £12.5 m. of Performance Reward Grant (PRG) will be paid to the partnership. The County Council's share of this would be £9.4m. The distribution of the PRG in relation to their participation in varying numbers of the targets is shown at Appendix A.
6. The proportion of PRG received is dependent on the authority achieving more than 60% of the stretch (the difference in expected performance with and without the LPSA) relating to a particular target or sub-target. If the authority

achieves less than 60% of the stretch no PRG will be received in relation to that target or sub-target. Appendix B shows the full list of targets and sub-targets, and also shows our actual performance in 2003/04. This gives some indication of the scale of stretch required to achieve the PSA target by March 2006.

7. To co-ordinate the delivery of the LPSA, the partners have set up an Oversight Group, composed of Lead Officers at a senior level from each partner agency. These Lead Officers are supported by Target Implementation Managers (TIMs) responsible for the delivery of individual targets. Progress is monitored and reported to the Oversight Group on a quarterly basis and is also included within the monitoring of progress against the MTCS.

PROGRESS TO DATE

Overall

8. Progress towards the targets is monitored in detail against several elements and Appendix C contains a summary of the overall position as at the end of June 2004. Progress currently appears sufficient to achieve the majority of the targets, i.e. targets 3, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11 and 12. However, for the remainder there are issues that jeopardise at least some part of their achievement, and consequently the amount of PRG receivable. In particular there are problems with two Education targets which apparently reflect similar difficulties experienced by other LEAs in meeting very high targets set by DfES.

Position on each target (partners are shown in brackets against each target)

Target 1 – Increase the percentage of pupils achieving 5 GCSEs at grades A* to C (County only)

9. The deadline for this target is summer 2005 exams. Progress will be capable of being judged on the basis of the June 2004 examinations, results of which will be available at the end of August / beginning September. Until we get those results we cannot judge whether progress is adequate. However, applying the trend over the last couple of years, it is doubtful whether this target will be achieved within the agreed time-scale.

Target 2 - Improve achievement of pupils at level 5 at the end of key stage 2 (County only)

10. Provisional examination results for 2004 suggest we will have great difficulty in achieving the percentage stretch required on this target within the agreed time-scale (summer 2005). The option of putting additional resources into schools has been considered but this, apart from being relatively costly, would not have sufficient impact within the time required.

Target 3 – Improve the educational attainment of all pupils in special schools (County only)

11. Progress on this target has been very good. The target for pupils in special schools achieving agreed educational levels has already been met. Effort is now required to maintain and/or continue to improve performance to ensure the PRG is received in full.

Target 4 - Improve the level of education, training and employment for care leavers aged 19 and improve the educational attainment of children in care (County only)

12. There has been a recent improvement in the percentage of looked after 16 year olds forecast to be in employment, education or training by the age of 19, with performance being above target. However, this is a high-risk element of the target since, due to the relatively small numbers involved, a small change in absolute terms means a large percentage change. 50% of the reward grant depends on its achievement.
13. There are concerns about achieving the part of the target relating to the percentage of looked after children missing school, which accounts for 20% of the PRG. Earlier difficulties in getting up to date information to monitor the position have now been overcome and measures to effect an improvement have been implemented, however it is too early to see the results.

Target 5 - Contribute to an increase in the employment rate for people with disabilities (County and Oadby & Wigston)

14. Progress on the various elements within this target has been good. An earlier concern about our ability to meet the target relating to the number of Council employees meeting the Disability Discrimination Act definition as a percentage of the workforce has been overcome with a change in definition by the Audit Commission.

Target 6 - Increase the participation of problem drug users in drug treatment programmes and increase the proportion of users successfully sustaining or completing treatment programmes (Health, Charnwood, N.W.Leics.)

15. A recent problem concerning the National Drug database, from which the statistics for part of this target are derived, has now been resolved and the Commission for Health Improvement has verified the baseline data (2003/04) for the number of drug users in treatment. Based on these revised figures the three elements of this target have already been met. Action still needs to be taken to maintain this level of performance until the end of the PSA.

Target 7 – Reduce the number of vehicle crimes (Police, all Districts, County)

16. Vehicle crime within the County is reducing at a rate that should be sufficient to meet the target in 2005/06. However, there is still a chance that this target may not be met due to the direct relationship between the rate of vehicle crime and the release date of offenders from prison. The police are working closely with the probation board to make sure that offender management is sufficient to ensure that this level of improved performance continues.

Target 8 - Reduce the overall level of domestic violence by working with victims and perpetrators (County, Police, all Districts except O.& W.)

17. There have been recurring problems with the accuracy of the data for the number of repeat victims of domestic violence reported by the police. Although the last reported figure showed a big improvement, this needs to be sustained if this element of the target, accounting for 55% of the total, is to be achieved. Progress on the other elements is more satisfactory.

Target 9 – Improve basic skills of young people with basic skills deficit who are receiving community supervision from YOS. (County, Harborough, Hinckley and Bosworth)

18. The number of young people successfully gaining an accredited qualification has risen beyond expectations and far beyond the original target. Ironically this success may cause a problem in that young people either work towards an accredited qualification or follow an individual learning plan (ILP). Because far more people are choosing to aim for qualifications a lower number are achieving 75% of targets in their ILP which puts that element of the target in doubt. However, since this is actually a problem of success, we are hopeful that the ODPM will recognise that this is an improvement on what was targeted in the LPSA agreement and award the PRG in its entirety.

Target 10 - Increase household waste recycling and composting (County, All Districts)

19. This target will always be relatively high risk due to the need for all District partners to contribute towards it. Although the forecast of household waste recycled and composted remains on target, there are a number of risks that need to be managed to ensure it remains on course. A number of Districts are in the process of changing or introducing new recycling arrangements and the impact of these on the overall totals will need to be monitored closely.

Target 11 – Cost effectiveness (County, All Districts)

20. All eight councils were ahead of target at the end of 2003/04, having achieved greater than 2½% improvement during the first year of the LPSA. This performance is expected to continue.

Target 12 – Reduction in number of road casualties on County and trunk roads – based on numbers killed or seriously injured (County)

21. Progress towards this target is very good. However, casualty figures can be subject to significant year on year fluctuations and so work continues to be undertaken to maintain this level of performance.

CONCLUSION

22. It is in the nature of the PSA that targets are intended to be challenging. Therefore there will always be some doubt about at least several of them being achieved in their entirety. At present overall progress appears quite good, but, as noted above, there are a number of areas of concern. These are being monitored and, wherever possible, practical steps to improve performance are being taken.

RECOMMENDATION

23. Members are REQUESTED TO NOTE this report.

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