



SCRUTINY COMMISSION: 7 NOVEMBER 2007

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY AND LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT

Purpose

1. The purpose of this report is to ask the Commission:
 - a) to consider how the “This is Leicestershire” evidence base report relates to the work of the Commission and the various Overview and Scrutiny Committees;
 - b) to contribute to the development of outcomes for inclusion in the Leicestershire Sustainable Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement; and
 - c) to comment on long-term vision for Leicestershire to be included in the consultation draft of the Sustainable Community Strategy.

Background

2. The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Bill identifies a Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) as “the way to identify and agree local priorities” and introduces a duty to prepare a Local Area Agreement (LAA), and for local partners to co-operate in the development and implementation of this Local Area Agreement.
3. Throughout the Bill, it is clear that the SCS and LAA should be about what we are collectively doing to improve quality of life in our area – with our partners, rather than as Leicestershire County Council – in the transition into the new performance regime led by the new Comprehensive Area Assessment (that will replace CPA).
4. Leicestershire County Council, on behalf of Leicestershire Together, is currently leading the development of the new Sustainable Community Strategy 2008 – 2013 and second Local Area Agreement (2008 – 2011). The County Council is the accountable body for the LAA and lead body for the SCS, and therefore member involvement in the development of these documents is key as they will provide a strategic framework around which our key conversations with the Government about performance will be focussed in the coming months and years.
5. Our new SCS will set the **high level outcomes** that partners want to achieve in Leicestershire by 2013 and the LAA will provide the **delivery framework**, mapping out how these outcomes will be achieved and

measured. The LAA will include all of the detail that you would expect to find in a delivery plan, including targets, performance indicators and information about performance, financial and risk management.

6. Alongside the Comprehensive Spending Review published earlier this month, the Government published a draft list of 198 national indicators. Collectively as a partnership of agencies working to improve quality of life in Leicestershire, we will have to provide performance information against each of these indicators on an annual basis. Our progress will be measured through the Local Area Agreement on around 50 targets. These include 17 mandatory Children and Young people/education targets but we will negotiate the other 30 plus targets with the Government (through our Government Office) between December and March.
7. In order to ensure that we are in a strong position to influence the targets that are included in the Local Area Agreement and that they reflect Leicestershire priorities as well as national priorities, we have produced 2 key evidence bases to inform the development of outcomes for inclusion in the Sustainable Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement.

“This is Leicestershire” and “Places in Leicestershire” reports

8. On the 5th October, all Members were sent links to two evidence bases developed to inform the Leicestershire Sustainable Community Strategy. These are titled **“This is Leicestershire”**, which covers **people and themes** and **“Places in Leicestershire”**, which focuses on the main towns, priority neighbourhoods and rural centres in each Community Forum area in the County. A copy of the Members’ Information Service item containing the links to the evidence bases is appended to this report.
9. Copies of these evidence base reports have also been forwarded to partners, who had until 26th October to forward a) comments on the evidence base and b) suggested priority outcomes for their particular area of expertise.
10. The draft Sustainable Community Strategy will be published for a 10 week consultation period between 12th November and 16th January, although we are asking people to submit responses by 21st December if possible in order to maximise the amount of time to incorporate changes into the final document.
11. The “This is Leicestershire” evidence base focuses on how Leicestershire has changed in recent years, what it is like now and what it will be like in the near future, what people in Leicestershire say they want, what is important in making people happy and key issues in relation to nine themes.

- Older People
 - Healthier Communities
 - Children & Young People
 - Safer Communities
 - Stronger Communities
 - Cleaner and Greener
 - The Economy
 - Housing
 - Transport
12. By the time the Commission meets, the relevant sections of the evidence base will have been considered by the Older People and Healthier Communities, Children and Young People, Environment and Community Services Overview and Scrutiny Committees, and the comments from these Committees will be made available at the meeting. The Community Engagement Scrutiny Committee will consider the Stronger Communities section at their meeting on 12th November.

Vision for Leicestershire in 2026

13. As part of the development of the Sustainable Community Strategy, a draft vision for Leicestershire has been developed which sets out what Leicestershire will look like in 2026. The draft vision covers this period to fit with the Regional Spatial Strategy (Regional Plan), as it is increasingly clear from both the Bill and other recent guidance on the development of SCS's and LAA's that spatial planning and community planning functions need to be much more closely aligned. Hence the draft vision focuses on what makes Leicestershire distinctive and unique.
14. The first draft of the vision is appended to this report for comment.

Next Steps

15. Comments from the Commission and the various Overview and Scrutiny Committees will be fed into the process of developing the first draft of the Sustainable Community Strategy, alongside feedback from the theme/cross-cutting partnerships and District Councils/Local Strategic Partnerships. The draft Sustainable Community Strategy will be circulated for public consultation from 12th November. Following the consultation period which ends on 16th January, the document will be revised and a second version will be brought to the various Committees and the Commission.
16. The final Sustainable Community Strategy will be agreed by April 2008. Between December and February around 50 targets (including the 17 mandatory Children and Young People ones) will be identified from the Sustainable Community Strategy for inclusion in the Local Area Agreement.

Conclusions

18. The Commission is asked to consider the “This is Leicestershire” evidence base report and contribute to the development of outcomes for inclusion in the Leicestershire Sustainable Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement, and to comment on the new long term vision for Leicestershire.

Equal Opportunities Implications

19. The evidence base was produced in order to highlight key areas that the SCS and LAA should consider when identifying priorities and outcomes for Leicestershire and its people.

Background Papers

- Draft “This is Leicestershire” report (evidence base for the new countywide SCS and LAA) – October 2007.
- Places in ... Blaby; Charnwood; Harborough; Hinckley and Bosworth; Melton; North West Leicestershire [respectively] reports – October 2007.

Circulation under Sensitive Issues Procedures

20. A copy of the above-mentioned background papers were circulated to all members via the Members Information Service on 5 October 2007.

Officer to Contact

Nicole Rickard

0116 3056977

nrickard@leics.gov.uk