

**SCRUTINY COMMISSION: 5<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2008****REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE****LEICESTERSHIRE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY –  
KEY MESSAGES FROM PUBLIC CONSULTATION****Purpose**

1. The purpose of this report is to give the Commission an opportunity to consider an overview of the comments submitted during public consultation on the Leicestershire Sustainable Community Strategy, prior to a second draft of the Strategy being circulated for a further short consultation period between 30<sup>th</sup> January and 15<sup>th</sup> February 2008 and further discussion at the next Commission meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2008.

**Background**

2. The draft Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) 2008 – 2013 sets out the high level outcomes that partners want to achieve in Leicestershire by 2013. The Local Area Agreement (LAA) 2008 – 2011 will provide a delivery framework – setting out how these outcomes will be achieved and how we will measure our progress.
3. Together, the SCS and LAA will provide a strategic framework around which key conversations with the Government will be focussed. The County Council is the accountable body for the LAA and the lead body for the SCS.
4. The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Bill makes it clear that the SCS and LAA must be about what we are collectively doing to improve quality of life in Leicestershire.
5. Leicestershire County Council has therefore given both partners and Members opportunity to be involved in the development of the new Sustainable Community Strategy and second Local Area Agreement through a range of partnership meetings and events and a 10 week public consultation period on the draft Strategy. Members have been specifically involved through various meetings (including all Scrutiny Committees and Commission), plus a targeted briefing event in October.

## **Developing the Sustainable Community Strategy**

6. The process of developing the Sustainable Community Strategy thus far has been as follows:
  - a) Development of “This is Leicestershire” and “Places in Leicestershire” evidence bases to inform the SCS, specifically the identification of outcomes relating to themes, people and places (these reports were circulated to all members on 5<sup>th</sup> October and considered by all Scrutiny Committees and the Commission in November).
  - b) The two evidence bases were used to inform the development of the draft Sustainable Community Strategy, including the identification of outcomes – what we want to achieve – by theme and cross-cutting partnerships.
  - c) Full public consultation on the draft SCS between 12th November and 16th January. Copies of the document were made available through schools, libraries and post offices and sent to key audiences such as the Top 100 businesses and communities of interest. The Strategy has been considered at a range of partnership meetings and responses submitted by key partnerships in the Leicestershire Together structure, including District Local Strategic Partnerships.

## **Key Consultation Messages**

7. A short survey in Leicestershire Matters and on the Leicestershire Together website was used to ask members of the public about which issues are most important in making somewhere a good place to live and/or which issues most need improving in their local area. 666 people responded to the survey and the top eight issues, in priority order, are as follows:
  - a) Level of Crime
  - b) Traffic Congestion
  - c) Health Services
  - d) Clean streets
  - e) Activities for teenagers
  - f) Affordable housing
  - g) Road and pavement repairs
  - h) Education

8. In addition to the “key issues” survey, people were also asked to complete a more detailed on-line response form in relation to the draft SCS, particularly focussing on the headline outcomes. The table attached at Appendix A shows the relative ranking of the headline outcomes within each of the seven main theme areas. Bold text indicates the outcome that respondents see as most important within this theme.
9. The written comments submitted by local individuals, groups and partnerships during the consultation period were generally very positive, with many people feeling that this Strategy better reflects the needs of the County than previous documents.
10. Detailed comments were received from 48 organisations/partnerships. These include 11 Parish Councils, all 7 District Councils/LSPs, 6 third sector (voluntary and community sector) organisations and 6 national/regional agencies. There were 10 responses from various sections/departments within LCC and 8 from other Leicestershire organisations and partnerships. More than 30 additional detailed responses were received from individual Leicestershire residents.
11. General comments, which will be taken into account prior to finalisation of the document, include the following:
  - Executive summary of the document
  - Put the glossary on the website within the SCS
  - Simplify the language wherever possible and ensure that “difficult” words are included in the glossary
  - Look at whether some information could be presented in charts or diagrams
  - Number the outcomes and sub-outcomes to make referencing them easier and explain the relationship between them
  - Provide more clarity about how the SCS and LAA fit within the wider regional, national and European context
  - More about relationship between SCS and District CSs and between LT and District LSPs
  - Need to explain how SCS inter-relates with planning process and the role of LDFs in delivering the spatial aspirations of the SCS
  - Consider adding an outcome or sub-outcome on market towns
  - No mention of the role of social enterprises
  - Greater emphasis on local procurement
  - Disaggregation of data using the urban/rural classification (DeFRA recommendation) so equitable delivery ensured in rural areas
  - Be more explicit about why this is a “sustainable” community strategy
  - Provide more clarity about how and when the Strategy will be reviewed and how impact on both rural and urban areas will be measured

- Expand the Environment section and remove climate change into the cross-cutting section in the document as it requires mitigation and adaptation strategies from other themes of the SCS
  - More focus on the historic environment and our nationally designated assets
12. Detailed comments have been provided against each of the chapters and the Vision, Mission and Principles. The comments on the seven LAA theme areas have been forwarded to the lead officer for each theme for their consideration. Comments on the cross-cutting and place sections are being considered by the Policy Team, who will propose changes in relation to the text in consultation with the lead partnership(s) or organisation(s).

### **Next Steps**

13. The next stage in the process is to make appropriate changes to the Strategy document in response to the numerous comments made during the consultation process and to re-circulate an amended document for further comment by key partners between 30<sup>th</sup> January and 15<sup>th</sup> February.
14. A second version of the SCS, incorporating changes suggested at this meeting, will be made available via an electronic link on the 30<sup>th</sup> January to enable those members who wish to do so to study the revised text before the Scrutiny Commission meeting. There will be further opportunity for discussion at the next Commission meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> February.
15. A briefing on the SCS and LAA2 is being held on 11<sup>th</sup> February for all Members. This will provide further opportunity to consider the revised SCS and progress with our second Local Area Agreement (see below).

### **Development of our second Local Area Agreement**

16. The second Local Area Agreement will take the priority outcomes in the revised Sustainable Community Strategy as its starting point. Progress against these outcomes will be measured by selecting around 35 indicators from the National Indicator Set of 198 Indicators, plus 16 mandatory children and young people's indicators.
17. It may be necessary to include local indicators (i.e. reported through Leicestershire Together rather than to Government) if it is considered that the indicators proposed in the national set do not allow any of our priority outcomes to be measured appropriately.
18. The first draft of our second LAA will be available on 30<sup>th</sup> January, along with the second draft of our SCS.

### **Equal Opportunities Implications**

19. The Sustainable Community Strategy has a significant focus on both equal opportunities across all themes, and reducing disadvantage in specific parts of the County and within specific communities of interest (see Vulnerable People and Vulnerable Places sections).
20. Prior to publication the SCS will be subject to an Equality Impact Assessment, this will assist us in identifying where the Strategy may have a detrimental impact on equal opportunities for all Leicestershire residents.

### **Environmental Implications**

21. A key thread running through a number of themes within the Strategy is to have regard to the environmental impact of proposed policies. The Cleaner Greener theme within Strategy has the following aims:-
  - i) Reduce our Contribution to Climate Change
  - ii) Ensure there is a high resilience to the effects of climate change
  - iii) Less Waste is produced and a reduced proportion goes to Landfill
  - iv) Increased resident satisfaction with the built environment and improved green infrastructure
  - v) An enhanced natural environment with improved protection.

### **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.
- Draft Leicestershire Sustainable Community Strategy – November 2007

### **Circulation under Sensitive Issues Procedures**

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**

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