

# Supplementary Committee Agenda



## ***Local Area Agreement for Essex - Scrutiny Task and Finish Panel Monday, 28th November, 2005***

**Place:** Committee Room 2, Civic Offices, High Street, Epping

**Room:** Council Chamber

**Time:** 7.30 pm

**Committee Secretary:** Simon Hill, Research and Democratic Services  
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### **4.a Local Area Agreements - Officer Report (Pages 3 - 20)**

The previously circulated agenda referred to an officer report which is now appended. Also attached is a table showing EFDC funding streams.

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## A LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT FOR ESSEX

### Overview

1. Government Guidance describes a local area agreement “as a new contract between central and local government to deliver the priorities of local people”. The guidance goes on to say, “In cities, towns and rural areas, we want to see shared goals delivered through strong local leadership and effective support from Whitehall. We aim to minimise bureaucracy and maximise delivery. This will achieve greater efficiencies for local authorities and their partners giving them the freedom to work in a “joined up” way to meet the challenges that localities face in dealing with crime and anti-social behaviour, adverse public health trends and the long term economic and social well being of our communities”.
2. The initial prospectus for local area agreements was published in July 2004. The agreements were set in the wider context of the Government's 10 Year Strategy to build a new relationship between central and local government based on mutual trust and responsibility. 20 local authorities were selected as pilots for the first phase rollout, which included Suffolk and Peterborough in the East of England.
3. The intention to have a second phase of agreements was announced in January 2005 (before the Phase 1 agreements had been completed) and Essex bid to be part of that process. The government, through its election manifesto has committed itself to the principle of local area agreements and has said it will rollout local area agreements across England over the next 2 years.
4. The second phase authorities were announced in June 2005 and new guidance has been produced for those authorities, which replaces that produced for the Phase 1 authorities. The second phase authorities in the East of England are Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Luton and Norfolk. A very tight timetable has been set down which requires local area agreements to be agreed and signed off with government for a start as from 1 April 2006. Southend and Thurrock Unitary Authorities are not part of this process but have

been given notice that they should have a local area agreement in place as from 1 April 2007.

5. It is quite clear that the Government expects every authority in England to participate in the local area agreement process. The second phase launch took place in July 2005 and was discussed at the meeting of the Essex Local Government Association held on 21 July 2005. In making the announcement, the Government set a deadline of 30 September 2005 for the initial submission of the local area agreement for Essex. Members of the Task and Finish panel have been provided with a copy of the outline agreement. Members have also been supplied with a copy of the newsletter issued by the Essex Partnership which gives a further update.

### **The scope of the Local Area Agreement**

6. A local area agreement is a three year agreement that sets out the priorities for a local area agreed between central government, represented by the Government Office, and a local area represented by the Local Authority and Local Strategic Partnership and other key partners at local level. It will be refreshed annually, which will enable changes in national or local priorities to be reflected. The Government's Spending Review 2006 is given as one example that might necessitate such a review.
7. Government Guidance acknowledges that for two tier areas, arrangements will be more complicated. It requires the County Council and the County LSP to lead the discussions but goes on to say the Local Area Agreement provides a real opportunity to facilitate joint working between County and District Councils, LSP's and other partners. It also acknowledges that areas will have to work hard to identify and agree priority outcomes and any agreement will need to demonstrate that there has been engagement with District Councils and their partners. The agreement must set out the particular contribution each partner will make to the agreed outcomes.
8. The agreement is made up of outcomes, indicators and targets aimed at delivering a better quality of life for people through improving performance on a range of national and local priorities. Government Guidance requires these priorities to be grouped round 4 blocks which are Children and Young People,

Safer and Stronger Communities, Healthier Communities and Older People and Economic Development and Enterprise. The Guidance says these blocks provide very wide-ranging coverage of issues in a local area. However, the priorities need not be confined to these blocks. Local areas are encouraged to consider other crosscutting priorities that do not fit into the four blocks but that can also be tackled through the Local Area Agreement.

9. The Essex Agreement is based around the four blocks specified in the Guidance, contains 13 priorities and 46 targets, three quarters of which interlink across the four blocks. This is shown in the view foil slides provided with the agenda. The view foil slides were provided by Councillor Mrs Collins and came from a further presentation to the Essex Local Government Association on 10 November 2005.
10. In order to ensure the successful delivery of a Local Area Agreement, the Guidance holds out the prospect of significant freedoms and flexibilities and sets out examples of these in an annex to the Guidance (Annex C) which is reproduced with this report. The annex shows the flexibilities and freedoms, which are available generally, and examples of those negotiated by the Phase 1 pilot authorities.
11. The process in Essex is being led by the Essex Partnership Steering Group, which to all intents and purposes is the County level LSP. That group has asked Paul Coen, Chief Executive of the County Council, to establish an Executive Group to lead on negotiation and manage the project. District Councils have been divided into 4 groups each of which is represented on the Executive Group by a District Council Chief Executive as follows:
  - North Essex - Adrian Pritchard (Colchester)
  - South Essex - Paul Warren (Rochford)
  - Mid Essex - Steve Packham (Chelmsford)
  - West Essex - Alastair Bovaird (Uttlesford)

12. The Local Area Agreement also offers the possibility of some new monies via the mechanism of the former Public Service Agreements but requires this to be negotiated as part of the Local Area Agreement. The bulk of the costs of meeting the LAA, however, are to be met through the pooling of existing funding streams and the redirection/reprioritisation of existing mainstream budgets. Essex County Council estimates that the total sum in question is in the order of £136,229,000. In addition it estimates that District and Borough Councils collectively received another £197.3 million of which £7.4 million could be pooled centrally or locally. The County Council's working papers are reproduced as an Annex hereto. At a recent Partnership Executive Group (PEG) meeting. It was agreed that the leads for the four LAA blocks should start considering all potential funding streams that might be used to deliver on their priorities.

Furthermore the group was of the view that the issue of funding should not be solely focused on special-purpose funding streams. It was felt that Partners should also consider the case for using their mainstream funding (potentially Revenue Support Grant) to deliver LAA priorities or indeed pooling resources in the widest sense, including in kind.

The Essex LAA is due to submit a second submission to GO-East by the end of November which will need to include an indication of how each of the four blocks will be funded. With this in mind Districts have been asked to review any special-purpose funding streams they currently receive that is capable of being pooled. An annex detailing this information will be produced and tabled at the meeting before being passed for information to County.

Members will also be required to give some consideration to the suggestion that mainstream funding could also be volunteered for pooling

At this stage the PEG would stress that this does not represent a firm commitment to include such funding in the LAA and in addition it should be noted that no decisions have yet been taken as to which funding streams will be pooled and which will be aligned.

## The Epping Forest position

13. The position now is that each District/Borough Council and Local Strategic Partnership in Essex is asked to look at the 13 priorities and choose which ones are most relevant to the local situation. To that end the Council is in effect being asked whether it will sign up to the Local Area Agreement, (does it really have a choice!) and if so what contribution it is willing to make towards a successful outcome. The difficulty is that the four blocks and 13 priorities are fairly general in nature and we really need to know the details of the targets before any firm commitment can be entered into. That detail is still being worked upon and is therefore not available.
14. It is not expected that every agency will sign up to every target. Rather that organisations should identify which targets are important to them and sign up to those particular objectives. To that end there will be targets which are particularly relevant to health, or education or the not for profit sector for example, which enable the Local Area Agreement to be delivered through what is described as a real test of partnership.
15. The Epping Forest Local Strategic Partnership has given some consideration to this matter already and given conditional notice that it is likely to support:

**Priority 1**            since reducing obesity levels and the resultant health problems in children and young people are already matters of concern to the Primary Care Trust and feature in their business plans.

**Priority 4**            since this is considered to be a real issue in Epping Forest in that provision for older people had been brought down to an average level across the County to the disadvantage of our constituents in what is a very high cost area.

**Priority 10**          since Crime and Disorder issues are of extreme importance to the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership who have been given statutory targets by the Government which they must plan to meet.

**Priority 11** since environmental matters are considered to be of extreme local importance and likely to become more so in the light of the pressures which will come about as a result of the East of England Plan.

**Priority 12** since this reflects the wider role of the community and voluntary sector in developing community capacity building so that local people and communities develop their skills and knowledge to empower them to become involved in the development of their area and helping them to play a role in shaping local services.

**Priority 13** in recognition of the need to address the levels of deprivation at the very local level, particularly in Waltham Abbey, but also in other parts of the district where deprivation scores are prevalent below the ward level.

The Local Strategic Partnership had been asked to identify no more than 3 or 4 priority areas in its response but felt unable to do so for the reasons set out above. It did however reserve its position to amend its selection once performance indicators and targets begin to emerge. The LSP is due to consider this matter further at its meeting on 24 November 2005.

15, The Council is now being asked to carry out the same exercise and this Task and Finish Panel is charged with giving initial consideration to the issue. The Panel therefore needs to answer the following questions:-

- Should the Council be recommended to sign up to the Local Area Agreement for Essex?
- If yes, which of the 13 priorities are likely to be ones, which the Council would be willing to support?

(These should only be priorities where the Council is really prepared to direct its resources and efforts in order to make a real difference. To that end the priorities should be ones which already feature in the Councils' published plans).



- Since the targets and performance measures are not yet known, and in view of the very short timescales in which decisions are likely to be required, the Council should be advised to delegate these decisions to Heads of Service in consultation with Portfolio Holders and the Management Board.
- Does the Council have any views or advice to be made known to the Local Strategic Partnership about the Council's preferences in relation to the Local Area Agreement or the selection made by the Local Strategic Partnership?

### **Priorities for Epping Forest District Council**

The Panel may wish to consider whether some or all of the following priorities would be appropriate for the Council to sign up to. At this point, this should be a provisional recommendation only since it is not possible to make firm recommendations until such time as the actual targets and performance indicators are decided upon.

**Priority 3** Ensure development is designed to promote healthier living in the build environment and provide decent and affordable housing.  
**Reason.** It is a priority for this authority to provide decent and affordable housing. The draft alterations to the local plan already contain a target for the number of dwellings to be built to the lifeline homes standard. The requirement for developers to submit Health Impact Assessments with relevant planning applications by April 2009 is a matter we could seek to address.

**Priority 4** Reduce the need for older people to go into hospital or residential care.  
**Reason.** In broad principle this priority seems more relevant for colleagues in health and social care. However, the Council has in the past developed a range of services through Housing and Leisure which contribute towards this priority. Perhaps we should keep our options open until the final detail is produced.

- Priority 8** Keep children and young people safe and enable them to contribute positively to society.  
**Reason.** The Council has statutory duties in relation to Crime and Disorder and Homelessness which impacts on the Domestic Violence agenda and accommodation for children leaving care. Subject to the final targets, these may be actions we could and should take which would contribute towards this priority.
- Priority 9** Save lives at risk from accident.  
**Reason.** This is a broad priority which covers a whole range of situations from road safety through to fires in the home. Once the final targets are agreed, there may be issues that this authority could address. This could range from smoke detectors in the homes of vulnerable Council tenants through to swimming lessons for children.
- Priority 10** Reduce crime and the fear of crime.  
**Reason.** The Council has a statutory duty to participate in the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership and to target its mainstream services in such a way as to contribute to reductions in crime. This ranges from planning estate layout and design, to windows and doors in Council houses, to anti-social behaviour and CCTV. Just about all of the Council's Service have a role to play (if not a duty) in relation to this agenda.
- Priority 11** Actively manage our environment.  
**Reason.** The environmental agenda is an important issue for this authority. Early indications are that the targets will cover waste, domestic energy (CO<sup>2</sup> emissions) and car travel (CO<sup>2</sup> emissions). The Council's published plans set high priorities in some of these areas and the Council is making major investments on recycling and waste minimisation. The Green Belt and possible impacts of the East of England Plan are also important issues.

- Priority 12** Increase people's ability to influence public decisions and service delivery.
- Reason.** This addresses issues of public participation in local affairs. On first glance the priority seems to be addressed at the voluntary and not the profit sector but these are issues which could be important to the Council. Again we need to keep an open mind until the final targets and performance indicators are known.
- Priority 13** Improving people's quality of life and sense of belonging in the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods.
- Reason.** This addresses quality of life issues for which there is a mandatory outcome measure. Satisfaction with local public services is required to be measured as part of the regular Best Value survey. The Council's CPA pointed out the need to address areas of deprivation and these have now been identified and will feature in the new Council Plan. Targets are likely to address social inclusion issues where the Council has statutory duties as well as interests around community activities, culture, art and sport as well as accessibility.

## **ANNEX C – FREEDOMS AND FLEXIBILITIES FOR LAAS**

### *CORE LIST OF FREEDOMS AND FLEXIBILITIES THE AREA WILL AUTOMATICALLY GET AS A RESULT OF HAVING AN LAA:*

- Ability to pool funds from central government
- Flexibility to carry over a reasonable level of unspent resources from one financial year to another. Any funding rolled over still needs to be spent in support of outcomes included in the Agreement.
- Where areas deliver agreed outcomes more efficiently they can invest any savings in delivering the objectives of the LAA.
- Reduction in the monitoring and reporting requirements.
- Freedom to vire or combine some mainstream funding between organisations to meet shared LAA outcomes.
- Streamlined payment mechanisms, including removing the need to submit claims forms.

### *LIST OF FREEDOMS AND FLEXIBILITIES AGREED AS PART OF PILOT*

- DTI funds – local responsibility for managing and monitoring in line with Derby City Partnership systems and practices as approved and agreed by East Midlands Development Agency (EMDA) in the annual action and delivery plans, in particular in relation to EMDA and sub-regional strategic partnership. This has been agreed in principle subject to further detail being finalised.
- An increased limit for automatic approval for neighbourhood management pilot projects.
- Freedom to concentrate on hot spot areas of crime and disorder ensuring account is also taken of the needs existing within low crime areas.
- Support of a capacity-building project including secondment of an Audit Commission or other inspectorate performance expert to develop with Dorset a partnership performance management framework and feed in to future inspection practices.
- Invest to Save bid on VCS involvement in health – request to align with LAA approved subject to outcome of bidding round and return of unspent funds.
- Flexible models of delivery of children's centres to reflect the rural context.
- Increased flexibility in use of funds within the health and social care systems in the NHS towards preventative care for older people. Agreed in principle by DH, with details to be worked up by partners by September.

## Annex C: Eligible LAA funding streams received in Essex

### i) Essex County Council

Local Area Agreements - Funding Streams	Grant rec'd? Yes/No	2004/05 £000
<b>Block</b>		
<b>1 Children and Young People</b>		
Adoption Support and Special Guardianship	Yes	413
Carers Grant	Yes	516
	Yes	2,846
Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services	Yes	1,086
Children's Fund	Yes	3,013
Choice Protects	Yes	539
Community Support Grant		
Communities for Health Monies		
Connexions		
Education Health Partnerships	Yes	107
Extended Schools (Standards Fund)	No	
Kerbcraft		
Key Stage 3 – Behaviour and Attendance	Yes	183
Key Stage 3 - Central Coordination	Yes	932
LEA Support for Workforce Re-modelling	Yes	791
LPSA reward grant		
National Training Strategy	Yes	639
Neighbourhood Renewal Fund		
Neighbourhood Road Safety Initiative		
Neighbourhood Support Fund		
Positive Activities for Young People		
Primary Strategy Central Coordination	Yes	1015
General Sure Start Grant (revenue)	Yes	5573
Sure Start Local Programmes (revenue)		
Clacton	Yes	1201
Harwich Local (mini surestart)	Yes	126
Harlow (childrens)	Yes	821
Teenage Pregnancy	Yes	392
Transforming Youth Work Performance Improvement Fund		
Vocational and Work Related Learning – funds are paid through Government Offices		
Vulnerable Children Grant	Yes	2006
Partnership Grant		
School Travel Plans Capital	Yes	210
School Travel Advisors Revenue	Yes	196
Standards Fund – local authority retained element of new amalgamated single grant.	Yes	1782

Local Area Agreements - Funding Streams		Grant rec'd?	2004/05
<b>2</b>	<b>Healthier Communities and Older People</b>		
	Disabled Facilities Grant		
	Falls Prevention		
	HaSCIE		
	Healthy Living Centre		
	Learning Disabilities		455
	LPSA reward grant		
	Neighbourhood Renewal Fund		
	Pension Partnership Fund		
	Physical & Sensory Deprivation		
	Preserved Rights Grant	Yes	8,917
	Relevant European funding		
	Residential Allowance Grant	Yes	8,422
	Supporting People	Yes	31,743
	Targeted Voluntary Sector Funding (Social Services)		
	Training support Grant	Yes	1,173
<b>3</b>	<b>Safe and Stronger Communities</b>		
	<b>i) Safer and Stronger Communities Fund – includes where applicable:</b>		
	Anti-Social Behaviour Grant		
	Building Safer Communities		
	Domestic Violence Grant		
	Drugs Strategy Partnership Grant	Yes	123
	HO Regional Director's Allocation		
	Business Crime Reduction Advisor Grant		
	Tackling Violent Crime Programme		
	Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder		
	Neighbourhood Element		
	Cleaner, Safer, Greener Element (liveability funding)		
	Section 16 Tenant Empowerment Grant		
	Single Community Programme Fund		
	Spearhead Monies		
	Street Scene (Mainstream Budget)		
	Tenant Empowerment Grant		
	Waste Performance and Efficiency Grant	Yes	260
	<b>ii) Other funding streams</b>		
	ASB Action Area		
	Aggregates Levy Sustainability Fund	Yes	130
	Anti-Social Behaviour Trailblazer		
<b>4</b>	<b>Economic Development and Enterprise</b>		
	Local Enterprise Growth Initiative(LEGI)		
	<b>All</b>		
	<b>Blocks Neighbourhood Renewal Fund</b>		

<b>Local Area Agreements - Funding Streams Other Funds that can be Pooled or Aligned Locally</b>	<b>Grant rec'd?</b>	<b>2004/05</b>
Big Lottery Funding	Yes	166
Communities for Health		
PE and School Sportclub Link	Yes	5
Sport England/Active England	Yes	58
Learning and Skills Council		
Adult Learning REV	Yes	9173
Adult Learning CAPITAL	Yes	516
Post 16	Yes	41886
Learner support funds	Yes	49
Change Up		
Elements of LSC funding		
LSC loan liability	Yes	216
Mainstream Support for Local Transport		
NHS Funding		
Capital, highways maintenance and bus support	Yes	2842
Kickstart/bus challenge projects		
Arts Council England Managed Funds	Yes	217
English Heritage Historic Areas Grant	No	
Renaissance in the Regions (Museums Funding)		
Pooled Treatment Budget	Yes	195
RDA single pot		
Rural Pathfinders Funding Sources	No	
Waste Resource and Action Programme	Yes	221
Safety Camera Partnerships	Yes	4622
<b>Other grants not mentioned above</b>		
<b>English Heritage Project Funding:</b>		
Heritage Advice Management & Promotion projects		122
Field Archaeology Unit projects		37
Heritage Information and Records projects		95
Conservation schemes		199
Total		136,229

## ii) District and Borough Councils

We have carried out a preliminary survey of specific grants paid to the twelve district councils in Essex, based on published information. In 2003/04 these amounted to £197.3m. However, not all of these funding streams will be capable of being pooled or aligned. Because councils' published reports do not always reflect the government's terminology, we will now need to carry out a more detailed exercise to determine exactly how much of this amount may be eligible for inclusion in the Local Area Agreement. Counting only the most obvious matches between the sources we have available and Annex A of the LAA Guidance, we estimate that there will be at least £7.4m that can be pooled either centrally or locally.

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**Eligible LAA funding streams**

<i>Funding stream</i>	2004/05		2005/06		2006/07
	Grant Received? Yes/No	£'000	Grant Received? Yes/No	£'000	Grant likely to be received Yes/No
a) Children and Young People ..... ..... .....					
b) Healthier Communities and Older People <b>Disabled Facilities Grant</b> <b>Supporting People</b> <b>(assumed to be accounted for in</b>	Yes	131	Yes	144	Uncertain

<b>County figures)</b>						
c)	Safer and Stronger Communities  <b>Building Safer Communities Fund</b>	Yes.	152  (inc. £25k ASB Grant)	Yes	152  (inc.£25k ASB Grant)	Yes.  Through ECC LAA Safer Stronger Block/Working Group. Negotiations continue with GOEAST Crime Reduction Unit  Unknown
d)	<b>Waste Performance &amp; Efficiency Grant</b> Economic Development and Enterprise ..... ..... .....	No		Yes	40	
e)	Funds that can be pooled or aligned locally <b>Big Lottery Funding Communities for Health PE and School Sport Club Link Sport England/Active England Arts Council England Managed Funds Renaissance in the Regions</b>	No No No No No No		No No No No No No		We hope to submit bids for funding from all of these streams in the near future
f)	Funding Streams that cannot be pooled in					

an LAA						
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Please return to Kevin Nunn ( [Kevin.Nunn@essexcc.gov.uk](mailto:Kevin.Nunn@essexcc.gov.uk) ) by 25 November 2005

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