

Report to Finance and Performance Management Scrutiny Panel



Date of meeting: 14 November 2006

Portfolio: Finance, Performance Management and Corporate Support Services

Subject: Essex Local Area Agreement

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Committee Secretary: A. Hendry (Ext 4246)

Recommendations:

That the Scrutiny Panel:

- (a) consider and agree proposed actions and targets within the priority areas of the Essex Local Area Agreement adopted by the council; and**
- (b) agree appropriate performance management arrangements for monitoring the achievement of targets within the priority areas of the Local Area Agreement.**

Report:

1. (Head of Human Resources and Performance Management) As the Scrutiny Panel will be aware, Local Area Agreements (LAA) are contracts between local and central government intended to secure improvement across a number of priority areas over a three-year period. The LAA scheme was first published in June 2004 and a number of pilot schemes were run in a first phase. The Government expects every authority to participate in the LAA process and the second phase of the scheme, which included Essex, was announced in June 2005.

2. The Essex LAA is a joint project between the county's thirteen Local Strategic Partnerships, which bring the county's local authorities together with the community and voluntary sector and local arms of national public sector organisations. The Essex Partnership is leading the LAA process on behalf of the other partners, and this council's contribution to the LAA was coordinated by a Task and Finish Panel that reported to the Cabinet in November 2005.

3. The Essex LAA was formally adopted in March 2006 and contains the following priorities:

Priority 1	Reduce Obesity
Priority 2	Reduce the number of people who smoke in Essex
Priority 3	Ensure development is designed to promote healthier living in the built environment.
Priority 4	Reduce the need for older people to go into hospital or residential care
Priority 5	Generate inward investment and stimulate business development and innovation
Priority 6	Increase the number of young people who take a job or stay on in

	education or in training
Priority 7	Raise educational attainment
Priority 8	Keep vulnerable children and young people safe
Priority 9	Save lives at risk from accidents
Priority 10	Reduce crime, the harm caused by illegal drugs and to reassure the public, reducing the fear of crime
Priority 11	Build respect in communities and reduce anti-social behaviour
Priority 12	Actively manage our environment
Priority 13	Empower local people to have a greater voice and influence over local decision-making and the delivery of services
Priority 14	Improve the quality of life for people in the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods and ensure service providers are more responsive to neighbourhood needs and improve their delivery

5. The LAA breaks down each of these priorities into a number of specific targets.

Epping Forest District Council Priorities

6. At its meeting on 21 February 2006, the Council resolved to support the general principles of the LAA in, in recognition of the fact that all of the identified priorities could bring benefits for the population of the Epping Forest District. In particular, the Council agreed to target its own activities towards the following five priorities:

- **Priority 3** – Ensure development is designed to promote healthier living in the built environment;
- **Priority 8** – Keep vulnerable children and young people safe;
- **Priority 10** – Reduce crime, the harm caused by illegal drugs and to reassure the public reducing the fear of crime;
- **Priority 11** – Build respect in communities and reduce anti-social behaviour; and
- **Priority 12** – Actively manage our environment.

5. The individual LAA targets that flow from each of these priorities are as follows:

Priority 3 – Ensure development is designed to promote healthier living in the built environment

- (a) All local authorities will ensure that their Local Development Frameworks (or equivalent development plan document) contain a policy requiring Health Impact Assessments for relevant planning applications by 2009;
- (b) The number of new homes built to the Lifetime Homes Standard (LHS) in each borough/district will be a minimum of 3% of annual completions by 2009;

Priority 8 – Keep vulnerable children and young people safe

- (c) Increase the percentage of young people leaving care who are in accommodation that meets their particular support needs to 55.5%;
- (d) Reduce the number of children and young people who are victims of crime or anti-social behaviour, by reducing the number of recorded non-minor crimes where the victim is aged 0-19 by 3% year on year; and
- (e) Reduce offending by children and young people by increasing positive attitudes and behaviour among those at risk of offending, by increasing the use of Acceptable Behaviour Contracts by 15%;

Priority 10 – Reduce crime, the harm caused by illegal drugs and to reassure the public reducing the fear of crime

- (f) Reduce the number of traders who are willing to supply alcohol to young people in Essex; the percentage of young people on the books of YOS who have re-offended with an offence relating to drugs or alcohol; and the percentage of young people receiving a service from the Leaving and After Care Service who are misusing drugs and/or alcohol;
- (g) Increase the number of adult drug users in treatment in Essex and the percentage retained in treatment for 12 weeks or more;
- (h) Reduction in 10 key crimes (basket of crimes) from 2003/04 baseline by 16.5% by March 2008 across the LAA area;
- (i) Reduction in fear of crime - increase the sanction detection rate (including charge and caution) for domestic violence offences;

Priority 11 – Build respect in communities and reduce anti-social behaviour

- (j) Reduction in perceived anti-social behaviour (as measured by survey) from 32.2% in 2003/04 to 29% in 2008/09, to be linked into the developing Respect Action Plan, which was launched nationally on 9 January 2006;

Priority 12 – Actively manage our environment

- (k) Reduce or limit the increase in size of Essex's ecological footprint in terms of household waste collected per head of population and CO2 emissions from domestic energy use and car travel;
- (l) Maximise recycling and composting of household waste (BVPI 82a and 82b); and
- (m) Improve the cleanliness of and public satisfaction with Essex gateway areas and adjoining lands based on BV199a and BV89.

6. A number of actions and targets for the relevant priorities have now been developed, and are attached for consideration by the Scrutiny Panel as Appendix 1 to this report. The attention of members is drawn to a number of actions and targets within Priority 10, which can only be achieved in partnership with other agencies and where the council has a supporting rather than leading role.

Performance Management Arrangements

7. The Head of Human Resources and Performance Management has considered how the measurement of LAA achievements should be built into the council's performance management framework.

8. The Cabinet has agreed a recommendation of the Task and Finish Panel that Overview and Scrutiny should monitor progress against the council's LAA actions and targets. It is suggested that this would best be undertaken through by the Finance and Performance Management Scrutiny Panel as part of its remit to consider issues relating to the council's overall performance. Once all relevant actions and targets have been formally agreed, these could be incorporated into the 'Ten' performance management system in order that quarterly monitoring and reporting arrangements mirror those recently introduced for the Key Performance Indicators.

9. This approach is also to be taken in respect of the monitoring of performance against

actions and targets contained in the new Council Plan 2006-2010. In addition, it is suggested that the LAA actions and targets should be subject of a quarterly performance report to Management Board, in the same way that the Board also currently reviews KPI three-monthly performance.

10. The Scrutiny Panel is requested to consider the draft actions and targets developed in relation to Priorities 3, 8, 10, 11 and 12 of the Essex LAA, and to agree arrangements for the future monitoring of performance.

Reason for decision:

11. To report on the development of actions and targets within the priority areas of the Essex LAA adopted by the council, and to recommend appropriate performance management arrangements in view of the corporate importance attached to the identification and achievement of relevant actions in support of the LAA.

Options considered and rejected:

12. None. The Council could have chosen not to participate in the LAA process. However it is clear that the Government places great emphasis on the success of the area agreements.

Consultation undertaken:

13. The draft actions and targets developed in relation to Priorities 3, 8, 10, 11 and 12 of the Essex LAA, and proposed arrangements for the future monitoring of performance, have been agreed by Management Board.

Resource implications:

Budget/Personnel/Land: As set out within individual actions and targets

Council Plan/BVPP reference: Council Plan Section 9 – ‘How We Measure Our Success’

Relevant statutory powers: None

Background papers: None

Environmental/Human Rights Act/Crime and Disorder Act Implications: None

Key Decision reference: (if required) None