



# The Birmingham Local Area Agreement



Safer and Stronger Communities



Children and Young People



Healthier Communities and Older People



Enterprise and Economic Development

A report from Overview & Scrutiny







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Reports that have been submitted to Council can be downloaded from  
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# Preface

**By Councillor Tanveer Choudhry**

Chair, Local Area Agreement Task and Finish Overview and Scrutiny Committee



I am very pleased to be able to present this Scrutiny review of our Local Area Agreement - my very first report to City Council.

Whilst we did not get off from the starting blocks as swiftly as we would have liked, we quickly made up for this by setting a brisk pace, followed by a sprint finish to ensure that our report was ready in time for this Council meeting. I am grateful for the willingness of Members to attend our frequent meetings during which we have had some lively and good discussions.

In undertaking Scrutiny reviews it is important that both the evidence giving and the identification of outcomes are purposeful and inclusive. I think I can confidently report on behalf of my colleague Members that we feel the evidence provided was both helpful and insightful which has enabled us to come forward with what we believe are some very important and timely recommendations.

We were very impressed at the very positive and constructive way partners contributed to our fact finding. I hope they similarly found the experience positive. I hope they can also see in our report recommendations which will take forward the lessons we have learnt so far.

Thanks are also due to the City Council Officers who contributed to our work and the support provided from the Scrutiny Office.

Of all our recommendations I would highlight the importance of those which deal with the necessity for us to get to grips with Neighbourhood Renewal Funding (NRF). We believe the evidence we have heard around the way NRF can sometimes dominate partnership discussions will prove possibly one of the most telling contributions we can make. In a perverse way this focus on NRF funding can sometimes prove a distraction from looking at broader service issues and better ways of working.

We were struck by how much is now dependant on NRF and it is imperative that the City Council gets a handle on this as quickly as possible. We know that NRF is due to end in March 2008. It is not sensible to wait until then to take decisions around funding of activities/projects which have delivered real community benefits. We need to address these issues now.



## 1 Summary

- 1.1 Local Area Agreements (LAAs) were introduced in July 2004 in a context of greater devolution of power to Local Government and in a spirit of developing partnership between local stakeholders and a new relationship between Central and Local Government.
- 1.2 LAAs should focus on agreed local outcomes to improve service delivery, simplify funding streams from Central Government which affect an area and promote local decision making to achieve efficiency gains.
- 1.3 After a first year of LAA implementation, the main benefits of LAAs are expected to be:
  - Better ways of joint working across agencies, often with significant improvements in local partnership commitment and energy.
  - Acceleration of integration of services within the main LAA blocks and
  - A recognition that such joined up working is leading not only to improved outcomes and performance, but the beginnings of efficiency savings through, for example, the merging and simplification of financial administration of funding streams.
- 1.4 A new, more central role for LAAs is following in the wake of these benefits. The recent Local Government White Paper sets out fundamentally different arrangements for LAAs which will come into effect in April 2008. The new LAAs which will be introduced in April 2008 will mean:
  - LAAs will be the only place where Central Government will agree targets with Local Authorities and their partners on outcomes delivered by Local Government on its own or in partnership with others.
  - LAAs will no longer be about specific funding for specific targets. Because they will now include all targets agreed with Central Government, delivery against the targets is now effectively supported by all resources in the area.
  - There will be a new unringfenced area based 'LAA' grant, with a presumption that all area based funding will go through this route unless there are very strong arguments for retaining a ring fence. This grant will have no performance reporting or other conditions attached.
- 1.5 The White Paper moves Local Area Agreements from the margins to the mainstream – they are the centrepiece of the new performance frameworks. Local Area Agreements are no longer just about specific funding for specific targets. There are some 35 agreed targets to cover everything Local Government delivers on its own or in partnership, supported by all resources in the area. Local Strategic Partnerships are the single over-arching partnerships, setting strategy and priorities, with delivery through individual partners and thematic partnerships. It is therefore essential that Members are fully engaged with this area's work as it will become increasingly pivotal in delivering the service improvements across localities.



## 2 Summary of Recommendations

	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>
<b>R1</b>	That the good practice which has been demonstrated in some Constituencies where Members are being fully consulted and engaged is replicated in all Constituencies.	Cabinet Member for Local Services & Community Safety	July 2007
<b>R2</b>	That the increasing importance of the Local Area Agreement be recognised by the Political Group Leaders and that they ensure adequate involvement by their Members.	Political Group Leaders	July 2007
<b>R3</b>	That the relationship between the Birmingham Strategic Partnership and the Constituency Strategic Partnerships be clarified so that it constitutes a formal agreement, with specified outcomes.	Cabinet Member for Local Services & Community Safety	October 2007
<b>R4</b>	That if there continues to be both a thematic and local spend component under any new Government regeneration funding regime there must be better communication as to their contents and how they complement one another.	Cabinet Member for Local Services & Community Safety	If and when the new regime is introduced.
<b>R5</b>	That the new Birmingham Strategic Partnership Director be asked to produce an early communication plan between the Birmingham Strategic Partnership and the Constituency Strategic Partnerships.	Chair of BSP	October 2007
<b>R6</b>	That a report be prepared on a Constituency by Constituency basis on what projects are currently being funded by the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF) together with any evaluation which has been undertaken of their value and outcomes.	Cabinet Member for Local Services & Community Safety	October 2007
<b>R7</b>	That the Birmingham Strategic Partnership should be asked to consider which NRF funded projects, either thematic or locally determined, they think should receive continued funding.	Chair of BSP	November 2007
<b>R8</b>	That complementary to R7 above, the Chairs of the Constituency Strategic Partnerships should be asked to consider which NRF funded projects they think should receive continued funding.	Chairs of CSPs	November 2007



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<b>R9</b>	That the Birmingham Strategic Partnership and the Cabinet consider the information from R6, R7, and R8 so that discussions can be fed into partners' budget planning processes for 2008/09.	Chair of BSP and Cabinet Member for Local Services & Community Safety	November 2007
<b>R10</b>	That, because of the significance of ceasing NRF funding for local projects and in light of the information provided above, the Co-ordinating O&S Committee should consider maintaining a Scrutiny group, possibly with the same membership as the Task and Finish group, to keep the situation under review.	Chair of Co-ordinating O&S Committee	October 2007
<b>R11</b>	That the Birmingham Strategic Partnership, working with the LAA Block Leads, should ensure that performance is monitored against outcomes using a robust process of assessment to ensure that there is evidence of significant impact on LAA target outcomes and report the results to the Birmingham Strategic Partnership and the Constituency Strategic Partnerships.	Chair of BSP	Ongoing
<b>R12</b>	That a designated link officer within the Birmingham Strategic Partnership delivery unit should have specific responsibility for communication between the Birmingham Strategic Partnership and both the Constituency Strategic Partnerships and the Constituency Committees.	Chair of BSP	July 2007
<b>R13</b>	That the Birmingham Strategic Partnership be asked to give consideration to the most appropriate way for advice on commissioning to be given to Constituency Strategic Partnerships by partner organisations.	Chair of BSP	October 2007
<b>R14</b>	That a review of the various targets currently being used be carried out to ensure their continued relevance.	Chair of BSP	March 2008
<b>R15</b>	That the opportunity of using proxy indicators/local targets in addition to mandatory targets be communicated more widely.	Chair of BSP	July 2007
<b>R16</b>	That the Co-ordinating O&S Committee consider the most appropriate way of monitoring the work of the LAA on an ongoing basis.	Chair of Co-ordinating O&S Committee	July 2007





<b>R17</b>	Progress towards achievement of these recommendations should be reported to the Co-ordinating Overview and Scrutiny Committee in November 2007.  Subsequent progress reports will be scheduled by the committee thereafter, until all recommendations are implemented.	Chair of BSP	November 2007
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## 3 Background

### 3.1 The National Context

- 3.1.1 **Local Area Agreements (LAAs)** were introduced in July 2004 in a context of greater devolution of power to Local Government and in a spirit of developing partnership between local stakeholders and a new relationship between Central and Local Government.
- 3.1.2 Building on the experience of Local Strategic Partnerships, the first round was launched in March 2005 with 21 pilot councils and a second round of 66 Authorities is now in place. The Government plans to introduce LAAs in all unitary Authorities this year.
- 3.1.3 Government Offices in the regions took the lead in negotiating with local partners on behalf of Government.
- 3.1.4 **The purpose of LAAs is clear:** they should focus on agreed local outcomes to improve service delivery, simplify funding streams from Central Government which affect that area and promote shared local decision making to achieve efficiency gains. In an effort to harmonise national and local targets through increased flexibility at the local level, Government departments will relinquish the day-to-day control of some of their programmes.
- 3.1.5 A agreed outcomes, indicators and targets were negotiated around four 'Blocks' of activity, with some Authorities given the flexibility of pooling all funding into a 'single pot'. Previously separate pots of funding from various Government departments were being channelled to different public bodies, serving the same local populations. The intention is to use the LAA as a mechanism to pool and align funding.
- 3.1.6 LAAs also built on Local Public Sector Agreements, a reward scheme for Local Authorities improving services, which are now an integral part of LAAs .
- 3.1.7 An LAA is a three year agreement, based on a local Sustainable Community Strategy, that sets out the priorities for a local area agreed between Central Government (in our case Government Office West Midlands), and a local area, represented by the Local Authority and other key partners through a Local Strategic Partnership (for us the Birmingham Strategic Partnership).
- 3.1.8 **LAAs also have secondary objectives** of:
- Improving Central and Local Government relations
  - Enhancing efficiency
  - Strengthening partnership working and
  - Offering a framework within which Local Authorities can enhance their community leadership role.



- 3.1.9 Central government will continue to set high-level strategic priorities, but the intention behind the LAA policy is to explore the scope for Central Government departments to move towards stronger partnership working with Local Authorities.
- 3.1.10 This is to be achieved through LAAs negotiated between local partners and the Government Offices (GOs) on behalf of Central Government, specifying a range of agreed outcomes shared by all delivery partners, with associated indicators and targets.
- 3.1.11 LAAs allow Local Councils increased freedom in the delivery of public services. However there are very few provisions to ensure local accountability.
- 3.1.12 **The Local Authority is the accountable body** for the delivery of the LAA as a whole. However, there are very few provisions to ensure local accountability. The only reference to accountability in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) now Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) prospectus is towards Whitehall monitoring. The initial provision for accountability is clearly 'top-down' and does not set any standards for horizontal or 'bottom-up' accountability.
- 3.1.13 There is a need for local leadership from Local Authorities as first among equals in these partnerships. Only the Local Authority can command the political legitimacy and degree of democratic accountability required of public services. This is reflected in the recent Local Government White Paper which envisages a greater leadership role for Local Authorities in Local Strategic Partnerships.
- 3.1.14 If Local Government is to have more power it needs to build on the structures of local accountability which already exist and to strengthen them accordingly.
- 3.1.15 Unfortunately, it appears that, because of its language and seeming bureaucracy, the importance of the LAA and the fact that it is the main relationship between Central and Local Government is not being properly identified.

## 3.2 The Birmingham Context

- 3.2.1 **The Birmingham Strategic Partnership (BSP)** is the Local Strategic Partnership for Birmingham and was established in 2001. It was known as the City Strategic Partnership until October 2004. It brings together key public agencies and representatives of the business, community and voluntary sectors to achieve more effective joined up action, particularly in relation to neighbourhood renewal and tackling deprivation.
- 3.2.2 The BSP consists of a number of elements:
- **A Board** that brings together senior representatives from key public sector agencies, business, community and voluntary sectors. The board is chaired by the Deputy Leader of Birmingham City Council and reaches strategic agreements in response to shared goals and dilemmas and helps to align and facilitate delivery actions of its various partners.



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- **A Programme Board** was established in September 2005 as a sub-group of the BSP Board. It has an oversight and co-ordination role with one of its purposes being to improve overall delivery of an Annual Operational Plan covering the Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement.
- The Delivery Structure is organised around the BSP Programme Board. It is currently chaired by the Regional Director of the Learning and Skills Council, and its membership includes, amongst others, the Deputy Leader, the Chief Executive of Birmingham City Council, the Chief Executives of a local Primary Care Trust, the Assistant Chief Constable of West Midlands Police and the Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning.
- **An Operational Group** was established to deliver on the detailed work of the LAA. Lead officers for each of the Blocks, staff with performance management and financial management expertise and GOWM all attend this group.
- There are four LAA themes each with a thematic partnership responsible for delivery: Health and Well Being Partnership (for Healthier Communities and Older People), Children and Young People's Partnership (for Children and Young People), Birmingham Economic Development Partnership (for Enterprise and Economic Development) and a group of partnerships to deliver for the Safer and Stronger Communities theme.
- **A Programme Board Performance Group** which will meet quarterly has also recently been established as a sub-group of the Programme Board to facilitate discussion of performance management issues in more detail and address areas of under performance in more depth.
- This is supported by a dedicated performance management team. The BSP Board has agreed to use the "Performance Plus" performance management system as a cross-agency technology to facilitate the tracking of key objectives and targets. The Programme Board is committed to formally reviewing delivery of the LAA on a six-monthly basis, with lighter-touch intermediate quarterly reviews of financial performance.

3.2.3 **The BSP and Birmingham City Council (BCC) have negotiated a Local Area Agreement (LAA)** with National Government and Government Office – West Midlands (GOWM). The new community strategy "Taking Birmingham Forward" was published in October 2005, setting out a shared vision for the future. Important parts of "Taking Birmingham Forward" will be delivered through the LAA. A review of the city's overarching vision and strategy will take place this year which will provide a new framework for the LAA.

3.2.4 **Birmingham's LAA** was confirmed in March 2006, (a copy of the prime document is attached as Appendix 1) and runs from April 2006 to March 2009 with the aim of improving the quality of life for Birmingham citizens.

3.2.5 **LAAs are essentially a "deal" between local partners and National Government.** National Government offers simplified funding and accountability arrangements, and potentially new freedoms and flexibilities. Local partners agree to deliver the agreement's outcomes which are based on national and local priorities.



- 3.2.6 **The objective is to improve key outcomes for Birmingham** by making better use of funding and developing innovative delivery of services, through strengthened partnership working.
- 3.2.7 **The LAA focuses on “closing the gap”** between the eleven priority wards and the city average outcomes and improving the quality of life for Birmingham people, making a difference for the people and places with greatest need. It sets out a clear vision of big improvements to Birmingham.
- 3.2.8 **Delivery is organised around four “blocks”** (which will in future be referred to as “themes”) which each have a Delivery Plan and partnership delivery structure. These are:
- Children and Young People
  - Healthier Communities and Older People
  - Enterprise and Economic Development and
  - Safer and Stronger Communities.
- 3.2.9 **Three Floor Target Action Plans** (FTAPs) are in place to respond particularly to areas which are under-performing against high level outcomes:
- Housing
  - Health and
  - Worklessness.
- 3.2.10 There is currently a proposal to set up small, strategic Delivery Support Units in the City Council from existing resources to drive delivery of the Council’s priority outcomes, including the outcomes included in the LAA (See Appendix 6 for proposed structure chart). This should help to ensure that projects and investment are focussed on delivering the priorities set out in the Community Strategy and the LAA.
- 3.2.11 **There are also six cross-cutting themes** which are relevant across the Blocks:
- Community Safety
  - Equalities and Cohesion
  - Environmental Sustainability
  - Community Engagement
  - Voluntary and Community Sector and
  - Culture and Sport.
- 3.2.12 Cross cutting Leads have worked with the Block Leads and GOWM to ensure that these themes are integrated into Block targets and proposed activity.
- 3.2.13 There is also a City-wide Cultural Partnership which is linked to the Safer Stronger Communities Block which aims to address cultural issues within the context of the LAA.



## 3.3 The Constituency Context

- 3.3.1 It was recognised that in a city the size of Birmingham the BSP cannot adequately reflect the full range and diversity of interests. There is a need to engage with local communities and a network of locally based partnerships, originally called District Strategic Partnerships, now known as Constituency Strategic Partnerships (CSPs), have been set up to take account of local interests.
- 3.3.2 Constituencies will be key to delivering the citywide targets agreed by the LAA.
- 3.3.3 Out of the ten CSPs four areas were chosen to pilot **Constituency Area Agreements (CAAs)**. These were not stand alone agreements particular to a Constituency but a set of planning commitments for improving performance against targets included in the LAA. The four pilot areas were chosen on the basis of having a range of deprivation issues and a willingness to take part as pilots and were approved by the BSP.
- 3.3.4 The aim is to provide targeted intervention and partnership working at constituency and neighbourhood level. The pilot areas are:
- Hall Green
  - Perry Barr
  - Ladywood and
  - Northfield.

## 3.4 LAAs – The Role of Scrutiny

- 3.4.1 **The Local Government White Paper “Strong and Prosperous Communities”** was published by the Government on 26<sup>th</sup> October 2006.
- 3.4.2 The White Paper is about creating strong, prosperous communities and delivering better public services through a rebalancing of the relationship between Central Government, Local Government and local people. It tackles a range of issues across Local Government, from the relationship with citizens to the working of strategic and thematic partnerships, and includes topics such as the Local Area Agreement.
- 3.4.3 The proposals in volume one of the White Paper are now contained in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Bill which was introduced to Parliament in December 2006. The Bill is currently in the committee stages and Royal Assent would be anticipated, subject to Parliamentary approval, in Autumn 2007.
- 3.4.4 **The Bill envisages an enhanced role for Overview and Scrutiny (O&S)** in three main areas:
- Partnership Working
  - The Community Call for Action and
  - Health.



- 3.4.5 **Strengthening partnership working** and the relationship with partners is the main focus of this review, although all three areas are important.
- 3.4.6 The Government intends to legislate to put many public sector partners under a “**duty to co-operate**” in matters such as drawing up the Community Strategy, delivering the Local Area Agreement and in the Overview and Scrutiny process.
- 3.4.7 It is therefore important for Scrutiny to begin to tease out what its role should be in this area. This links directly with the issues highlighted in Part B ‘The Role of Scrutiny’ in section 3 of this report. Strengthening partnership working is also important in the context of the recent CPA report which highlighted the issue of how the City Council relate to partners.
- 3.4.8 We have taken evidence which reflects both perspectives. We have taken evidence from partners who talked positively about the relationship with the City Council and how it is maturing and developing. We have also taken evidence from partners where they still feel that relationships with the City Council are over bureaucratic and that the Council can sometimes want to impose their own ways of working and are reluctant to relinquish control. We need to take stock of partnership working and look at how we engage with partners. Given the role envisaged for Scrutiny in the Bill it is important for Scrutiny to look at this.
- 3.4.9 **Accountability** is another area where Scrutiny has a role. At paragraph 3.29 the White Paper states:
- “An essential part of the democratic process is holding to account those who are exercising executive leadership.....The new system will require Scrutiny arrangements that are even more effective.”
- 3.4.10 The document goes on:
- “.....However, research shows that the perception is that while Scrutiny Committees are good at reviewing service outcomes and involving external stakeholders, they are weak at reconciling community opinion or providing a forum for community debate.”
- 3.4.11 The Government’s proposals to strengthen Overview and Scrutiny include matters such as the Community Call for Action and the duty of partners to co-operate, both in providing information to Scrutiny inquiries and in responding to findings and recommendations.
- 3.4.12 The White Paper saw this as a way to strengthen Councillors’ ability to solve problems for their residents. As the Committee is aware, one version of the call for action is contained in the Police and Justice Act 2006. The Government committed itself in the White Paper to “a similar remedy to cover Local Government matters more generally, in other words those issues which Local Authorities are responsible for either alone or in partnership with others”.
- 3.4.13 The legal form which the call for action takes in the Bill is set out at Section 92 which allows:
- any member of an O&S Committee to refer to the committee any relevant matter; and



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- any member of the Local Authority to refer any relevant matter to an O&S Committee which he or she does not sit on.
- 3.4.14 By "refer to" the Bill means to ensure that the matter is included in the agenda for, and discussed at, a meeting of the committee.
- 3.4.15 While the Bill states that Members, when deciding whether to refer a matter to an O&S Committee, will have to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State, the Bill itself does not set out what such guidance should cover. The White Paper makes it clear, though, that the Government envisages Local Councillors as being able either to resolve problems through negotiation with service providers or through using budgets delegated to them by the Local Authority (this is referred to later in this report). In the words of the White Paper, reference to an O&S Committee "will be particularly appropriate for the more intractable or strategic issues on which councillors need to work with colleagues and take a broader view."
- 3.4.16 Section 92 of the Bill clarifies that the O&S Committee may decide whether or not to investigate the Member's issue. If it decides not to, it must explain the reasons for its decision. Again there is some guidance here in the White Paper:
- "The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will need to act as a gatekeeper to ensure that the issues it deals with are of genuine interest to the community.....Local committees will be able to set their own rules in the light of local circumstances to ensure that they concentrate their efforts where they can make a difference. They might, for example, wish to agree a limit on the number of calls for action individual Councillors will bring to the committee."
- 3.4.17 The fundamental change in the role of Members which is brought about by the Bill is the power for all Members (not just executive members) to control a budget and exercise executive functions on their own within their own ward, rather than as a member of a committee. This is in Section 166 of the Bill. The power to make these arrangements lies with the "senior executive member" (i.e. the elected Mayor or the Leader of the Council).
- 3.4.18 O&S Committees will be able to summon members and question them about their use of these budgets.
- 3.4.19 The Government has for some time been preparing to change the arrangements for involving patients and the public in health and social care services. The Bill accordingly abolishes Patients Forums and the Commission for Patient and Public Involvement in Health. Instead it lays clear duties on various NHS bodies to consult users on the planning of service provision, the development of proposals for significant changes in service provision, and significant decisions on operating services.
- 3.4.20 In addition, section 153 of the Bill gives each Local Authority the duty to "make contractual arrangements" for local involvement networks. The activities of these networks will include:
- promoting, and supporting, the involvement of people in the commissioning, provision and Scrutiny of local care services;





- obtaining the views of people about their needs for, and their experiences of, local care services; and making
  - i. those views known, and
  - ii. reports and recommendations about how local care services might be improved,

to bodies responsible for commissioning, providing, managing or scrutinising local care services.

3.4.21 These “care services” include both health services and social services (which in turn includes social services provided under both the Children, Young People and Families, and the Adult and Community Services, portfolios). They also include both services provided within a Local Authority’s area and those provided elsewhere for people from the Local Authority’s area.

3.4.22 Service providers (including the City Council) will have to co-operate with the local involvement network, including allowing the network to inspect activities and premises. The network will be able to refer both health and social matters to O&S committees, and the committees will have to decide whether to investigate further or not.

3.4.23 The Department of Health has been consulting for some months on first the concept, and then more detailed proposals for these networks. The City Council’s Health O&S Committee is being kept up to date with the proposals as they develop.

3.4.24 Other specific suggestions include:

- Setting up area O&S Committees comprising both Councillors and co-opted local people, to review the impact of actions of the Council and other bodies in the immediate area;
- Encouraging authorities to focus Overview and Scrutiny on more strategic issues – “the priorities agreed as part of Sustainable Community Strategies, Local Area Agreements and other key strategic plans.” Matters such as climate change, community cohesion, developing vibrant town centres and responding to demographic changes are all mentioned;
- Encouraging greater use of Overview and Scrutiny Committees in policy development.



## 4 Conduct of the Review

### 4.1 Reasons for the Review

- 4.1.1 The LAA represents a new approach both between partners in the city and between the city and Central Government. Large funding streams are involved, potentially delivering important outcomes, including priorities in the Community Strategy and in Constituency Community Plans.
- 4.1.2 The review sought to answer the key question of whether the arrangements for implementing, managing and scrutinising the LAA are efficient, effective and properly providing local democratic accountability.

### 4.2 The Committee and its Terms of Reference

- 4.2.1 The review was undertaken by the Local Area Agreement Task and Finish Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Membership of the Committee comprised:

Councillor Tanveer Choudhry (Chairman)

Councillor Keith Barton

Councillor John Cotton

Councillor Zoe Hopkins

Councillor Timothy Huxtable

Councillor Martin Mullaney

Councillor Ann Underwood

Councillor Ian Ward

- 4.2.2 The officer team comprised John Cade as the Lead Officer, Rose Kiely as the Review Officer with Gail Sadler providing research support.

### 4.3 Evidence Taking

- 4.3.1 The Committee received verbal and written evidence from a range of individuals and organisations.
- 4.3.2 The evidence sessions were attended as follows:
- **October 2006** – Jason Lowther, Head of Policy and Performance presented the background to the LAA and described why it matters.
  - **14 November** – Jon Bright, Director of Performance and Delivery presented the national policy background and context.



Councillor Carl Rice, Chair of the Ladywood Constituency Strategic Partnership (CSP) attended to discuss the role of the CSPs.

Seamus Gaynor, Policy Development Officer attended in his capacity as Block Lead on Children and Young People.

- **28 November** – The Chairs of the other three CSPs piloting Constituency Area Agreements (CAAs) namely:

Councillor Keith Linnecor, Chair of Perry Barr CSP;

Chief Superintendent Andrew Nicholson, Chair of Northfield CSP and

Mohammed Shafique, Birmingham Community Empowerment Network and Chair of Hall Green CSP, attended to discuss the role of the CSPs.

- **12 December** – Focused on taking evidence from the other three Blocks:

Ian Coghill, Director of Community Safety and Environmental Services, Block Lead for Safer and Stronger Communities;

Veronica Docherty, Head of Economic Strategy, Block Lead for Enterprise and Economic Development and

John Grayland from the (Birmingham Health and Wellbeing Partnership) on behalf of the Healthier Communities and Older People Block.

David Maxted, Strategic Director of Local Services also attended.

Received a briefing note from the Head of Scrutiny on 'Local Area Agreements: Experience of Other Local Authorities. (Appendix 2)

- **16 January** – The Constituency Directors of the four piloting Constituency Area Agreements plus Sutton Coldfield namely:

Dave Allport, Interim Constituency Director, Ladywood;

Ifor Jones, Constituency Director, Northfield;

Jan Kimber, Constituency Director, Perry Barr;

Bret Willers Constituency Director, Hall Green and

Gill Taylor, Constituency Director, Sutton Coldfield.

- **30 January** – Written evidence was presented from Sheffield City Council (Appendix 3) and representatives from partner organisations attending were:

Chief Superintendent Steve Jordan, West Midlands Police;

Sophia Christie, Chief Executive Birmingham East and North PCT;

Brian Carr, Chief Executive BVSC, The Centre for Voluntary Action.

- **13 February** – Representatives from partner organisations namely:



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Jeremy Blackett, Chief Executive and Paul Hanna from the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce and Industry;

Vijith Randeniya, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, and Ashley Wain from the West Midlands Fire Service;

Philippa Holland, Director of the South Eastern Division and Andrea Whitworth from the Government Office for the West Midlands.

## 4.4 Linkage with Other Reviews

4.4.1 We are conscious of the fact that there is other work currently in progress around the LAA and we want to ensure that our work is complementary.

4.4.2 The BSP have commissioned consultants to conduct a review of the LAA. Originally this was due to be reported in April but we now understand that this has been put back to a later date which will allow this Committee to feed any relevant findings into this process.

4.4.2 The Audit Commission and Birmingham Audit are jointly carrying out an LAA audit. An officer meeting took place with the auditors carrying out this work and there are a number of issues around accountability and performance management which we know link with our findings. They will be focussing on performance management issues and are looking to us to take a stronger lead on governance matters. Some of the key issues emerging from the audit are:

- Aligned funding
- Pooled funding
- Efficiency savings
- Risk assessment process
- Roles/responsibilities of constituencies
- LAA delivery structure and
- Birmingham City Council's accountable body role.

4.4.3 The Cabinet Committee on Devolution also have various pieces of work in progress arising from recommendations contained in the Devolution and Localisation Scrutiny Report. They are minded to rollout the constituency pilots to other areas but will want to take account of our findings before making a final decision. (Appendix 4)

4.4.4 We have also seen the recent GOWM Highlight Report on the Birmingham LAA which covers progress in the six months from April 2006 to September 2006. (Appendix 5)

4.4.5 We have been mindful of these exercises and we have a tight timetable, recently meeting on a fortnightly basis, with the intention of producing a short report on the key issues relevant at the moment.



## 5 Findings and Recommendations

Responding to our terms of reference our findings relate firstly to the emerging lessons from the 4 pilots and secondly to the role of Scrutiny.

### 5.1 Emerging Lessons from the 4 Pilots

#### 5.1.1 Lack of Member Engagement

5.1.1.1 **Engagement of Elected Members is fundamental** because only the Local Authority, through the Elected Members can command the degree of democratic accountability required of public services.

5.1.1.2 Increased Member engagement will be essential to ensure that examples of best practice are picked up and mainstreamed as NRF funding comes to an end. Local projects which are recognised as delivering successfully need to be picked up within the Local Area Agreement (LAA).

5.1.1.3 This issue arose in the context of:

- **Lack of adequate Member engagement in some of the constituency pilot areas.**
- **Lack of Member involvement in the development of some of the Constituency Area Agreements (CAAs).** It was apparent from the evidence given that there were variations in levels of Member consultation and engagement amongst the pilot constituencies. In some areas Members felt fully consulted but in others there appeared to be little Member involvement in the development of the CAA. Some of this may have been due to the time constraints for the submission. Areas of good practice where Members have been fully consulted and engaged need to be replicated across all constituencies.
- **Lack of full engagement with Members not involved in Constituency Strategic Partnership (CSP) pilots** on either the pilots or the roll out across the city.

5.1.1.4 This is clearly a two way street. Officers need to ensure that Members are fully engaged in all LAA matters. Reports should be included on constituency committee agendas and not dealt with as separate briefing matters. This will also ensure that local residents are properly informed.

5.1.1.5 We were advised that a presentation took place for all Members of the Council in July 2006 and there was evidence that when drafting the Perry Barr CAA, briefing sessions were held for Members but that attendance was mixed. However, it was generally accepted that, for whatever reason, there is insufficient buy-in by Elected Members and that there is work to be done in this area to ensure that all Members are adequately briefed.

5.1.1.6 The recent Local Government White Paper moves Local Area Agreements from the margins to the mainstream – they are the centrepiece of the new performance frameworks. Local Area Agreements are no longer just about specific funding for specific targets. There are some 35



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agreed targets to cover everything Local Government delivers on its own or in partnership, supported by all resources in the area. Local Strategic Partnerships are the single over-arching partnerships, setting strategy and priorities, with delivery through individual partners and thematic partnerships. It is therefore essential that Members are fully engaged with this area's work as it will become increasingly pivotal in delivering the service improvements across localities.

	Recommendation	Responsibility	Completion Date
R1	That the good practice which has been demonstrated in some Constituencies where Members are being fully consulted and engaged is replicated in all Constituencies.	Cabinet Member for Local Services & Community Safety	July 2007
R2	That the increasing importance of the Local Area Agreement be recognised by the Political Group Leaders and that they ensure adequate involvement by their Members.	Political Group Leaders	July 2007

## 5.1.2 Relationship Between BSP and the CSPs

- 5.1.2.1 **Constituency Area Agreements** are not independent LAAs between the constituencies and government. They are about working through existing partnership structures to find ways to deliver accelerated performance in areas where their performance outcomes for local people were worse than city-wide performance, thereby contributing to the delivery of the city's overall LAA targets.
- 5.1.2.2 **There are two overlapping pieces of work currently in progress around the CSPs.** One arises from the Devolution and Localisation Scrutiny Committee report which went to the City Council in July 2006. This included two recommendations relating to Constituency Strategic Partnerships, requiring a review of their structures and funding. This work has now been incorporated into a broader project commissioned by the BSP. It is planned to take a report to Cabinet Committee Devolution relating to the practice, structure, capacity, alignment and resourcing of CSPs. The BSP lead on the review is Chief Superintendent Steve Jordan and from a BCC perspective the review is being co-ordinated by BCC Director of Policy and Delivery, Jon Bright.
- 5.1.2.3 **Whether the CAAs are really an 'agreement'** was the first key point raised in the evidence presented by the Constituency Directors. This was considered to be important because it determines what is meant to happen at constituency level.



- 5.1.2.4 What added value a constituency focus and a specific constituency LAA can bring to the City's LAA and in particular to the delivery of the outcomes needs to be given consideration i.e. how can constituencies:
- Take the lead
  - Develop complementary programmes or
  - Be better informed of city level activities.
- 5.1.2.5 Numerous other improvements were raised which need to be considered before deciding whether to roll-out CAAs across the other constituencies.
- 5.1.2.6 **Better quality and access to data at ward and where possible at neighbourhood level** is needed to enable better targeting of resources.
- 5.1.2.7 **Lack of capacity at constituency level** in terms of officer support was expressed in evidence by some constituency directors. Some expressed the view that there is a need to resource CSPs to enable them to programme manage CAAs.
- 5.1.2.8 **Flexibility is required by agencies and the LAA blocks/boards** to be able to respond differently to the needs and priorities of individual constituencies. Different solutions are needed in different parts of the city. In October 2006, the Block/Board and Floor Target Action Plan Lead Officers were requested to prepare draft projects relevant to individual constituencies by December 2006 and a response is awaited.
- 5.1.2.9 There is also a need to recognise the need for flexibility for different organisations, as well as different areas of the city. For example, the sub-regional Learning & Skills Council will of necessity need different engagement to the locally based police Operational Command Unit. Similarly there may be differences for different LAA themes (e.g. arguably economic development fits less at constituency level than at city level).
- 5.1.2.10 **There is a need for clarity between each block/board and each pilot constituency** about what is expected from pilot constituencies and whether they are responsible for delivery or simply contributing to delivery. This would enable the Block/Board to focus their areas of engagement with constituencies and concentrate on key issues which would help to achieve greater clarity and focus.
- 5.1.2.11 **Alignment of thematic NRF spending with spending at local level** needs to be improved. Local NRF spending could be matched with thematic spend. We were advised that there is currently very little dialogue in this area. There is also an issue of timeliness here as mentioned at 3.1.5.4. There is a need to give Members more information at constituency level as early as possible in the cycle. Constituencies need to understand how they can add value through:
- Allocation of ward NRF
  - Local facilities managed through constituencies and
  - Local knowledge.



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5.1.2.12 **Problematic organisational boundaries need to be reviewed** and where possible made coterminous. Specific reference was made in this context to the Access to Employment Groups (AEGs) which the City Council leads on and which have not yet moved to mirror constituency boundaries. We understand that this has now been partly addressed in the recent dialogue with the Learning & Skills Council and that clustering of Constituencies which will enable a better fit of AEGs with the Constituencies has been agreed but not yet implemented.

5.1.2.13 **Support is needed to the CSPs from the blocks/boards** in terms of officer attendance at meetings and supplying performance information.

5.1.2.14 **More dedicated support from partner agencies to work at constituency level** would improve engagement with partner agencies at constituency level. There was evidence that:

- Some key partners are not as yet engaging at constituency level:
- Lack of capacity rather than lack of will hampers some agencies in engaging at constituency level.

	Recommendation	Responsibility	Completion Date
R3	That the relationship between the Birmingham Strategic Partnership and the Constituency Strategic Partnerships be clarified so that it constitutes a formal agreement, with specified outcomes.	Cabinet Member for Local Services & Community Safety	October 2007
R4	That if there continues to be both a thematic and local spend component under any new Government regeneration funding regime there must be better communication as to their contents and how they complement one another.	Cabinet Member for Local Services & Community Safety	If and when the new regime is introduced.

## 5.1.3 Patchy Communication

5.1.3.1 **Inadequate links between CSPs and the Birmingham Strategic Partnership (BSP)** were highlighted. Questions were raised in particular about the level and adequacy of the dialogue between the BSP and the four constituencies piloting the CAAs on addressing 'closing the gap' targets.

5.1.3.2 **Strategy is not adequately and clearly communicated to local level** as a result of these inadequate links. The necessary information is not filtering down from strategic level to constituency level.

5.1.3.3 **The level of dialogue between the BSP and the constituencies** in both directions needs to be strengthened. In particular, feedback from the BSP on issues such as thematic spend needs





improvement. It was highlighted that there is no mechanism to feed issues up from the CSPs to the BSP.

5.1.3.4 **Insufficient joined-up working between Block Leads and Constituency Directors** was also evident. The constituency directors look to the Block Leads for a lead on what they can do and the Block Leads want more information from the Constituency.

5.1.3.5 **Inadequate links between CSPs and Constituency Directors was also apparent.** An event was held in February 2006 to provide an opportunity for the Blocks to share the priorities for each Block with the pilot constituencies and an event was held in early November 2006 to facilitate engagement between the four pilot constituencies and the LAA delivery group, involving those responsible for the 'Block' developments. The Constituency Directors were then to take forward issues through the CSPs and through the constituency planning process. It was apparent that this is not always happening as it should, although there are examples of good practice in certain areas. If common and consistent processes were in place this would help.

5.1.3.6 It was acknowledged that to date, the main focus has been on the development of the city-wide agreement and that there has been some uncertainty about how the pilots would work. However, ongoing engagement and dialogue is essential because of the need to be clear about the contribution and role of the CSPs in achieving outcomes.

5.1.3.7 **The lack of adequate communication and dialogue with other local partners** was also raised. The need for activities and local delivery plans to be communicated to the structure was highlighted.

	Recommendation	Responsibility	Completion Date
R5	That the new Birmingham Strategic Partnership Director be asked to produce an early communication plan between the Birmingham Strategic Partnership and the Constituency Strategic Partnerships.	Chair of BSP	October 2007

## 5.1.4 Fixation on NRF

5.1.4.1 We believe that the evidence we have heard and collected around the way in which NRF both dominates partnership discussions and is invariably the only additional source of funding available, will prove to be the most telling contribution we can make. We believe there is almost a sense of denial that NRF will end in March 2008 and little thought if any is being given to what happens after that date to the important community initiatives which are involved. Even the new BSP Director, we are told, is at this stage, NRF funded.

5.1.4.2 We were struck in evidence given by how much depended on NRF. It often appeared, no doubt unfairly, that the sole interest of people around the table was to access NRF at the expense of other issues.



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- 5.1.4.3 Too many discussions focus on the use of NRF monies which are new monies, not coming out of existing budgets. In many cases this focus on who can get hold of NRF to do what is proving a distraction from looking at service improvement issues and better ways of working. This excessive focus on NRF is getting in the way of genuine partnership working.
- 5.1.4.4 We know that NRF is due to end in March 2008. It is not sensible to wait until then to take decisions around funding of the many projects which are currently funded through NRF. We need to address this issue now. We need to look at what projects are currently being funded through NRF and think about how they will be mainstreamed in order to avoid panic next year.
- 5.1.4.5 Examples were repeatedly sought of where there was recognition that NRF funded projects were effective and steps were taken to mainstream the activity but we struggled to find examples of best practice being mainstreamed. This requires partner agencies to agree that service provision in one area should cease and resources be diverted to other priorities. There needs to be a willingness on the part of partner organisations to divert resources to address local priorities. This will be essential to enable NRF funded projects which are recognised as delivering effective outcomes locally, to be sustained once NRF funding ceases.
- 5.1.4.6 Two examples were given, though these we felt were still stretching our basic point somewhat.
- John Grayland the Male Life Expectancy Lead from the Birmingham Health and Wellbeing Partnership did give an example a change to mainstream practices of where the midwives were relocated from GP surgeries to Children's Centres:
  - An example of the Pensions Office moving staff to a Neighbourhood Office in order to target key outcomes was also given
- but generally it proved difficult to find examples of where this has happened.
- 5.1.4.7 There could be discontent locally if activities funded through NRF and valued locally are not picked up when NRF funding ceases. This will require both:
- a willingness by partners to divert resources to address local priorities and also
  - improved alignment between thematic NRF spend and local NRF spend.
- 5.1.4.8 A requirement for NRF bids to include an exit strategy was raised as a way of encouraging projects to be mainstreamed when NRF funding ceases.
- 5.1.4.9 Local NRF spend and thematic spend also need to be aligned. The importance of two-way dialogue on the activities funded through thematic spend and the success of projects funded locally is fundamental.
- 5.1.4.10 Information on thematic NRF spend is needed as early as possible so as to inform spending decisions at a local level which are complementary and to avoid possible duplication.
- 5.1.4.11 Pooled funding will be increasingly important in relation to the LAA. Pooled funding is received in one single grant from government. Aligned funding is where funds remain separate but the partners agree to achieve a common goal.



5.1.4.12 A willingness on the part of partner organisations to pool funding where this is permissible will be increasingly important. Whilst it is accepted that certain funds, such as police funds, Youth Justice Board funding and Young People's Substance Misuse Grants and Positive Futures funding are explicitly excluded from LAAs, there are opportunities to pool funding.

5.1.4.13 Tensions around allocation of NRF resources between LAA and CAAs and amongst constituencies could potentially lead to possible duplication of processes and lack of clarity/timeliness in communication around priorities.

5.1.4.14 Difficulties in influencing spend at ward level on constituency priorities were also referred to. Clarity is needed as to which activities would have the greatest impact. There needs to be dialogue with those organisations having resources available for particular activities e.g. PCTs for health related issues.

	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>
<b>R6</b>	That a report be prepared on a Constituency by Constituency basis on what projects are currently being funded by the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF) together with any evaluation which has been undertaken of their value and outcomes.	Cabinet Member for Local Services & Community Safety	October 2007
<b>R7</b>	That the Birmingham Strategic Partnership should be asked to consider which NRF funded projects, either thematic or locally determined, they think should receive continued funding.	Chair of BSP	November 2007
<b>R8</b>	That, complementary to R7 above, the chairs of the Constituency Strategic Partnerships should be asked to consider which NRF funded projects, they think should receive continued funding.	Chairs of CSPs	November 2007
<b>R9</b>	That the Birmingham Strategic Partnership and Cabinet consider the information from R6, R7 and R8 so that discussions can be fed into partners' budget planning processes for 2008/09.	Chair of BSP and Cabinet Member for Local Services & Community Safety	November 2007



	Recommendation	Responsibility	Completion Date
R10	That, because of the significance of ceasing NRF funding for local projects and in light of the information provided above, the Co-ordinating O&S Committee should consider maintaining a Scrutiny group, possibly with the same membership as the Task and Finish group, to keep the situation under review.	Co-ordinating O&S Committee	October 2007

## 5.1.5 Lack of Good Management Information

- 5.1.5.1 This is not the first Scrutiny Review to identify a need for better management information. This has been the subject of a number of our reviews and is very topical at the moment in the context of the Devolution and Localisation Review.
- 5.1.5.2 The importance of clear, accurate and timely performance management data is fundamental to improving the quality of services and life chances.
- 5.1.5.3 The ability to measure progress will be critical in ensuring:
- Greater transparency in relation to spending against targets:
  - Enabling us to focus on 'what works':
  - Enabling alignment of service delivery to LAA priorities:
  - Linking funding to outcomes:
  - Assessing progress towards LAA outcomes:
  - Challenging performance and
  - Addressing any gaps in outcomes.
- 5.1.5.4 There is a need within the LAA theme blocks to be able to identify what is working and concentrate of what works best and focus efforts on that. To do this we need to monitor performance against outcomes and feedback the results to the BSP.
- 5.1.5.5 We also need to ensure that there is adequate feedback from the BSP to the constituencies.
- 5.1.5.6 It may be that the newly formed BSP Programme Board Performance Group becomes the prime means of feedback to the constituencies but at any rate there is a need for a named person from the BSP to be responsible for liaising with the constituencies.



	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>
<b>R11</b>	That the BSP working with the LAA Block Leads should ensure that performance is monitored against outcomes using a robust process of assessment to ensure there is evidence of significant impact on LAA target outcomes and report the results to the Birmingham Strategic Partnership and the Constituency Strategic Partnerships.	Chair of BSP	Ongoing
<b>R12</b>	That a designated officer within the Birmingham Strategic Partnership delivery unit should have specific responsibility for communication between the Birmingham Strategic Partnership and both the Constituency Strategic Partnerships and the Constituency Committees.	Chair of BSP	July 2007

## **5.1.6 Need to Strengthen Commissioning Arrangements**

- 5.1.6.1 Organisations involved in the LAA are just beginning the process of challenging each other on targets. There is a move within the Blocks to move away from a process of using bids for services with a view to moving to commissioning activities aimed to secure specific outcomes to meet LAA targets.
- 5.1.6.2 Clarity is needed around which actions are effective in producing the required outcomes if this approach is to work to meet LAA targets.
- 5.1.6.3 Clarity is also needed about the role of CSPs in achieving outcomes. Constituencies should be required to demonstrate that they are doing what works. Once again, accurate performance data is critical in this regard and to ensuring that all partners accept and are focused on the priority areas. There needs to be clear evidence of good progress against targets.
- 5.1.6.4 We received evidence of the different views taken as to what constitutes commissioning. What constitutes commissioning for one CSP may be different for another CSP.
- 5.1.6.5 There is a need to ensure that all CSPs have a common approach to commissioning and clearly constituencies need to be given advice on the commissioning approach.
- 5.1.6.6 We take the view that commissioning is where the CSP identifies what outcomes it wants to achieve and then invites different organisations to bid for how they might achieve that. This involves a systematic approach to assessing the needs of an area/local people, mapping what



# The Birmingham Local Area Agreement

services currently exist, leading to a commissioning strategy. The process should include identification (and development) of providers, procurement, workforce planning and quality monitoring.

5.1.6.7 Whilst we accept that time constraints may not always allow this to happen we nevertheless recognise that it is good practice. We also recognise that training may be necessary to enable informed decisions to be made regarding commissioning.

5.1.6.8 Commissioning should include ways of engaging with potential new partners and groups and there is a role for locally based co-ordinators (eg. PCT employees in relation to teenage conceptions) in assisting with the commissioning of projects.

	Recommendation	Responsibility	Completion Date
R13	That, the Birmingham Strategic Partnership be asked to give consideration to the most appropriate way for advice on commissioning to be given to Constituency Strategic Partnerships by partner organisations.	Chair of BSP	October 2007

## 5.1.7 Outcomes that Will Make a Difference to the Floor Targets

5.1.7.1 Different objectives/targets require intervention at different levels ie. local, constituency, city-wide or possibly regional. Accurate performance data is critical to ensuring that decisions as to which interventions are most effective and at which level, are based on clear evidence eg. some interventions at constituency or ward level on worklessness may not be appropriate as interventions may need to be targeted at a more strategic level.

5.1.7.2 We need to ensure that we are measuring the right outcomes which are tailored to local needs. Doubts were raised about some of the measures used in the floor targets to measure success eg. in relation to health, some interventions may be appropriate at local level but it is necessary to ensure that we are measuring the correct indicators which can be influenced at local level such as cardiovascular fitness rather than male life expectancy.

5.1.7.3 There is tension between what's happening at city-wide level and at constituency level. Greater clarity and transparency is needed in relation to spending against targets and the need to align service delivery to LAA priorities. This links with the issue previously mentioned about patchy communication and high level strategy not filtering down to constituency level which understandably leads to lack of clarity around priorities at constituency level.

5.1.7.4 The evidence presented by the Director of Policy and Delivery, referred to the need to focus on outcomes to meet the LAA targets and the need to focus on what works. This requires a common approach to outcome planning which entails:



- Understanding the problem and the trend:
- Agreeing what we want to achieve:
- Knowing how we will measure progress:
- Involving key partners:
- Agreeing on what works:
- Preparing an action plan against budget and
- Investing in project management skills.

5.1.7.5 For each programme, project or service we need to ask:

- Is it aligned with a priority outcome?
- Are we doing the right things?
- How do we know?
- Are we doing enough of the right things?
- Are we doing the right things right?
- What can we stop doing?

5.1.7.6 The issue of mandatory targets which have not been subject to consultation being imposed as part of the 'refresh' process was also raised.

- This could potentially undermine the agreements reached through partnership working and it was thought to be unfair to 'shift the goal posts' without consultation with working partnerships already in place.
- Whether or not some of the mandatory targets are realistic and capable of being met was discussed. For example, the view was expressed that targets around worklessness should be numeric rather than a percentage reduction, to be realistically achievable.

5.1.7.7 Targets have to be meaningful within the timescales set for people to buy in to targets.

5.1.7.8 The use of 'proxy indicators' was mentioned in this connection. For example a number of these indicators are being used to measure the mandatory outcome on worklessness as it is not possible to measure the outcome directly. The proxy indicators in this area are around reducing the numbers of Job Seekers Allowance claimants to close the gap between priority wards and the city average and to close the gap between the overall employment rate for the city and the England average.



	Recommendation	Responsibility	Completion Date
R14	That a review of the various targets currently being used be carried out to ensure their continued relevance.	Chair of BSP	March 2008
R15	That the opportunity of using proxy indicators/local targets in addition to mandatory targets be communicated more widely.	Chair of BSP	July 2007

## 5.2 The Role of Scrutiny

5.2.1.1 The two main expected outcomes as set out at the beginning of this review are:

- A set of transparent, efficient and effective arrangements for accountability and management of the implementation of the agreement and
- A clear framework for Overview and Scrutiny of the LAA.

5.2.1.2 As previously mentioned, lack of adequate engagement with Elected Members raises an issue of potential lack of democratic accountability required of public services.

5.2.1.3 However the role of Overview and Scrutiny also needs to be considered in the context of accountability. The new Local Government White Paper contains a number of comments relating to the fundamental purpose and importance of Overview and Scrutiny and one of these purposes is certainly to provide accountability.

5.2.1.4 The Government intends to legislate to put many public sector partners under a 'duty to co-operate' in matters such as drawing up the Community strategy, delivering the LAA and in the Overview and Scrutiny process.

5.2.1.5 Essentially this appears to mean that the requirement to co-operate with a scrutiny investigation, including the provision of information and attendance at committee, will be extended to the public service providers who sit on the Local Strategic Partnership 'insofar as their actions related to functions or service delivery connected with the Local Authority'.

5.2.1.6 There is an expectation that Overview and Scrutiny arrangements should be used to provide Scrutiny of the Local Strategic Partnership and other public service providers involved in the Local Strategic Partnership. This is a matter which will need to be given consideration by the Co-ordinating Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

5.2.1.7 Exactly how this should be achieved is less clear. During the review we received evidence from the Government Office for the West Midlands who suggested several ways in which Scrutiny could make a contribution to the ongoing monitoring of the LAA.





5.2.1.8 The evidence reiterated that the LAA is effectively an agreement of what local partners will measurably deliver over a three-year period to underpin the Community Strategy. It makes the following suggestions about where Scrutiny might add value:

*"Scrutiny arrangements might therefore be helpful in focussing on what actual delivery improvements can be evidenced and that the LAA is having a measurable impact on priority neighbourhoods and communities of interest i.e. is the LAA delivering what it set out to deliver in terms of vision, outcomes and targets?"*

*Scrutiny might also consider those areas of performance that are identified as being at risk of under performance but which are critical to the social and economic development of the city and its residents.*

*Finally, Scrutiny might also wish to assess if the targets in the LAA are challenging enough to deliver the level of improved services needed in the city and if there is evidence that the LAA is leading to changes in service delivery procedures and new ways of working."*

	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>
<b>R16</b>	That the Co-ordinating O&S Committee consider the most appropriate way of monitoring the work of the LAA on an ongoing basis.	Chair of Co-ordinating O&S Committee	July 2007
<b>R17</b>	Progress towards achievement of these recommendations should be reported to the Co-ordinating Overview and Scrutiny Committee in November 2007.  Subsequent progress reports will be scheduled by the Committee thereafter, until all recommendations are implemented.	Chair of BSP	November 2007



# BIRMINGHAM LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT

March 2006





## Birmingham Strategic Partnership

The Birmingham Strategic Partnership is the Local Strategic Partnership for Birmingham and was established in 2001. It was known as the City Strategic Partnership until October 2004. It brings together, at a citywide and district level, key public agencies and representatives of the business, community and voluntary sectors to achieve more effective joined up action, particularly in relation to Neighbourhood Renewal and tackling deprivation.

### The Birmingham Strategic Partnership provides:

- The collective vision and shared leadership for the city
- A “family” of partnerships involved in delivering the Community Strategy
- A means to co-ordinate and facilitate joint working between agencies and organisations
- A means of securing commitment to common goals.

The Birmingham Strategic Partnership consists of a number of elements:

- A Board that brings together senior representatives from key public sector agencies, business, community and voluntary sectors. The board reaches strategic agreements in response to shared goals and dilemmas and helps align and facilitate delivery actions of its various partners.
- A Programme Board was established in September 2005 as a sub group of the BSP board. It has an oversight and co-ordination role with one of its purposes being to improve overall delivery of an Annual Operational Plan covering the Local Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy (LNRS), Community Strategy (called *Taking Birmingham Forward*) and Local Area Agreement (LAA).
- A family of partnerships linking and accountable for delivery of various actions their members take to deliver the Community Strategy (*Taking Birmingham Forward*) and Local Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy. These are either thematic partnerships such as health and well-being, community safety, employment, education and housing or population/settings-based partnerships such as children and young people. These partnerships are currently being reviewed and aligned to the four Local Area Agreement Blocks
- Multi-agency collaborations, which act as support to the BSP board and the programme board, such as the Information Sharing Group and the Programme Information Analysis Group.
- A network of District Strategic Partnerships that helps deliver the overall strategy for the city, as well as promoting shared vision and collaboration at the district and ward level.

## Contents

The Birmingham Local Area Agreement (LAA) consists of this main document, its two appendices and a series of four linked Background papers.

The key elements are:

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# BIRMINGHAM LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT

## Introduction

This Agreement sets out a clear vision of big improvements to Birmingham, focussing on “closing the gap” and improving the quality of life for Birmingham people.

Vision	<p><b>Closing the gap:</b> improving quality of life for Birmingham citizens, with a particular focus on making the fastest improvements for the people and for the places with the greatest need.</p>
Priorities	<p><b>Helping people to get jobs:</b> reducing poverty and creating prosperity and encouraging entrepreneurship and regeneration.</p> <p><b>Improving health outcomes:</b> enabling people to enjoy healthy lives and live longer.</p> <p><b>A cleaner, safer, better housed city:</b> where people feel safe and secure in homes which are decent and in sustainable neighbourhoods.</p> <p><b>Strengthening neighbourhoods</b> so that people feel they belong together, have a stake in their community and can influence what happens in their area.</p> <p><b>Improved outcomes for children and young people</b> so that they are healthier, safer, enjoy and achieve, and have economic wellbeing, and able to make a positive contribution to the city.</p>
Approach	<p><b>A preventative approach:</b> re-directing our energies and resources into working with communities to stop problems developing.</p> <p><b>A targeted approach:</b> protecting and nurturing vulnerable people.</p> <p><b>A sustainable approach:</b> development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.</p>

Our vision is grounded in the city’s newly agreed community strategy, *Taking Birmingham Forward*, and refined through extensive consultation with public, private and third sector partners.

Our vision is fleshed out by a series of priority outcomes and detailed targets which are set out under four headings suggested by Government:

- Children and Young People
- Healthier Communities and Older People
- Enterprise and Economic Development; and
- Safer and Strong Communities

Integral to the Agreement are the six key cross cutting themes which are expressed in each of the Blocks – namely, a commitment to ways of working which support:

- Community Safety
- Equalities and Cohesion
- Environmental Sustainability
- Community Engagement
- Voluntary and Community Sector
- Culture and Sport

The public agencies in the city will be held accountable for achieving the targets we set out in this document. They are our clear promise to the people of Birmingham, and will form the basis of our Agreement with national government.

This document:

- shows where we will focus improvements – identifying people who, and places which, are starting from a particular position of disadvantage in the city.
- contains outline plans for evidence-based interventions to achieve our priority outcomes for these places and people, to ensure that we focus our energies.
- shows how our use of financial resources are better aligned to achieve more with the existing level of funding.

In a city of a million people, with a wide difference between the most affluent and the most deprived people and places, the set of targets and key outcomes are of necessity large. The Agreement shows how these are linked across the four Blocks, and form a coherent set whose achievement will help us realise our vision.



## Background

People in Birmingham have much to be proud of. Twenty years ago, our city's economic and social fabric was threatened by world-wide changes that led to massive job losses in manufacturing industries. Since then, the city centre has been transformed. New jobs have been created. Educational achievement in the city's schools has been rising rapidly. Levels of recorded crime across the city are down.

Birmingham has turned a corner, and we can now look ahead to the future with confidence – using the energy and ability that has transformed parts of our city to tackle the new challenges that face us.

In October 2005 we published our new community strategy, *Taking Birmingham Forward*, which is our shared vision for the future.

There are three elements to our approach. Firstly, we want to maintain the improvement and modernisation of our city, attracting and generating investment and jobs. Secondly we aim to make Birmingham a city where people want to live and work, thereby reversing years of population decline. Thirdly, Birmingham's prosperity must be shared and enjoyed city-wide – in all its diverse communities, vibrant urban villages and neighbourhoods.

Our community strategy, *Taking Birmingham Forward*, sets out how we propose to go about this. A number of key principles underpin this strategy:

- The city needs everyone to realise their full potential. We want to raise ambitions and increase opportunities, particularly in more deprived areas and communities.
- We cannot improve the quality of life in Birmingham without the active support of the people who live and work in the city. We want to encourage people to look after themselves, to look after each other and to look after their communities.
- We want to involve people more in improving their city. Voluntary, community and faith organisations in Birmingham – and the people who give their time voluntarily to them – all make valuable contributions, which we must encourage and support.
- We should involve Birmingham's businesses more in taking the city forward. There are many ways in which their active involvement will produce benefits for business and the city as a whole.
- Our public services need to do things well, on time and every time, and in all parts of the city. They need to listen in order to understand what citizens and service users want. Where necessary, services will change in order to meet needs more effectively. By their approach, including to employment, local public services can help achieve many of the “closing the gap” targets set out here.
- Our policies need to be sustainable so that the city can be a place where people want to live and work both now and in the future.

Above all – more can be achieved if public services, private businesses and voluntary, community and faith organisations work together in pursuit of shared aims.

## **Developing the Local Area Agreement - an integrated approach**

Birmingham Strategic Partnership (BSP) and Birmingham City Council (BCC) have negotiated a Local Area Agreement (LAA) with national government and Government Office – West Midlands (GOWM). Through the Local Area Agreement we will deliver important parts of *Taking Birmingham Forward*.

Local Area Agreements are a “deal” between local partners and national government. National Government offers simplified funding and accountability arrangements, and potentially new freedoms and flexibilities. Local partners agree to deliver the agreement’s outcomes (which are based on national and local priorities). The objective is to improve key outcomes for Birmingham, by making better use of funding and developing innovative delivery of services, through strengthened partnership working.

### **Our Key Strategies**

We have recently completed the research and consultation leading to the development of our key over-arching strategies.

The following have all been revised in the past year:

- Community Strategy, *Taking Birmingham Forward*;
- Birmingham Community Safety Strategy;
- Health Improvement Plan;
- Birmingham Economic Strategy, *Developing Birmingham* and
- Children and Young People’s Plan.

These key documents form the shared basis for our Local Area Agreement.

### **Our Strategic Analysis**

As well as clarifying the outcomes we want to achieve in each of the four Blocks, the LAA has given partners and stakeholders the opportunity to build on the strategic analysis undertaken in updating our Community Strategy. We have reviewed issues and approaches across the piece, and identified key priorities where improvements will address issues across the Blocks of particular significance to the people of Birmingham.

### **Working across the piece**

In Appendix 1 we introduce each Block by summarising the focus of the Block, and highlighting how proposed actions will complement work within other Blocks.

In addition, the Birmingham LAA is underpinned by six cross-cutting themes:

- Community Safety
- Equalities and Cohesion
- Environmental Sustainability
- Community Engagement
- Voluntary and Community Sector
- Culture and Sport

Background Paper 4 (Cross-cutting themes) outlines in detail how our six cross-cutting themes are addressed throughout the Agreement. These are summarised in the table overleaf.

The use of information and communications technology is key enabler in transforming service delivery, driving community and economic regeneration and encouraging civic renewal. The Birmingham Strategic Partnership is supporting, *Digital Birmingham*, and there will be close working with the Digital Birmingham partnership to identify key areas of impact on the LAA objectives, as well as ways of accelerating the exploitation of digital technologies to ensure that the city is well placed to benefit from the digital age. This is key to ensuring that one of the UK's largest urban areas is able to harness the potential of the global information age, and that the economic, social and environmental benefits are brought to the city and its diverse communities. We are determined to make maximum use of this in planning the delivery of the outcomes in this agreement.

Further information on the rationale and evidence behind our chosen priorities for the LAA is provided in Background Paper 1 (Rationale and Evidence) which includes hyperlinks to our key strategic assessments and strategic plans.

## Cross-cutting themes in the Local Area Agreement

	<b>Approach/Priorities</b>	<b>CYP</b>	<b>HCOP</b>	<b>E&amp;ED</b>	<b>SSC</b>
<b>Community safety</b>	Key priority: ("A cleaner, safer, better housed city").	"Safe" outcome Fewer young offenders and victims.	Reduced vulnerability for older people.	Getting disadvantaged groups into work. Reducing business crime.	Reduction in crime supported by a range of key targets.
<b>Equalities and cohesion</b>	Key priority: Joint focus on disadvantaged groups and on strengthening neighbourhoods.	Reducing inequality around teenage conceptions, foundation stage, GCSEs.	Well-being agenda for older people.	Increasing employment in targeted wards and for BME groups.	Increasing "active citizens" and community empowerment.
<b>Environmental sustainability</b>	Key approach: ("a sustainable approach").	Commitment to increase walking and cycling to school. Improved qualifications.	Affordable Warmth programme for homes.	Supporting environmental business creation (e.g. recycling).	Decent Homes Standard. Increase in household re-cycling. Reducing CO <sub>2</sub> emissions.
<b>Community engagement</b>	Key approach: ("strengthening neighbourhoods").	Engagement of young people ("Hear by rights") Localisation of appropriate services.	Creating information gateway.	Developing business empowerment approaches.	Encouraging active citizens. Engagement around "clean and safe" agenda.
<b>Voluntary and community sector</b>	Standing conference established. Compact signed. Specific target to increase VCS delivery.	Developing commissioning approach, eg around youth work.	Commissioning as part of a well being agenda.	Support for social enterprise.	VCS delivery, e.g. on reducing youth offending and around drugs.
<b>Culture and sport</b>	Seen as means to achieve key outcomes throughout.	Target around engagement in sport and arts. Healthy schools			Increase in Green Flag Parks.

# Our key outcomes and priorities

## The drive for improvement

In developing the LAA, we identified a number of key areas for improvement, many of which are already reflected in our Community Strategy. These included:

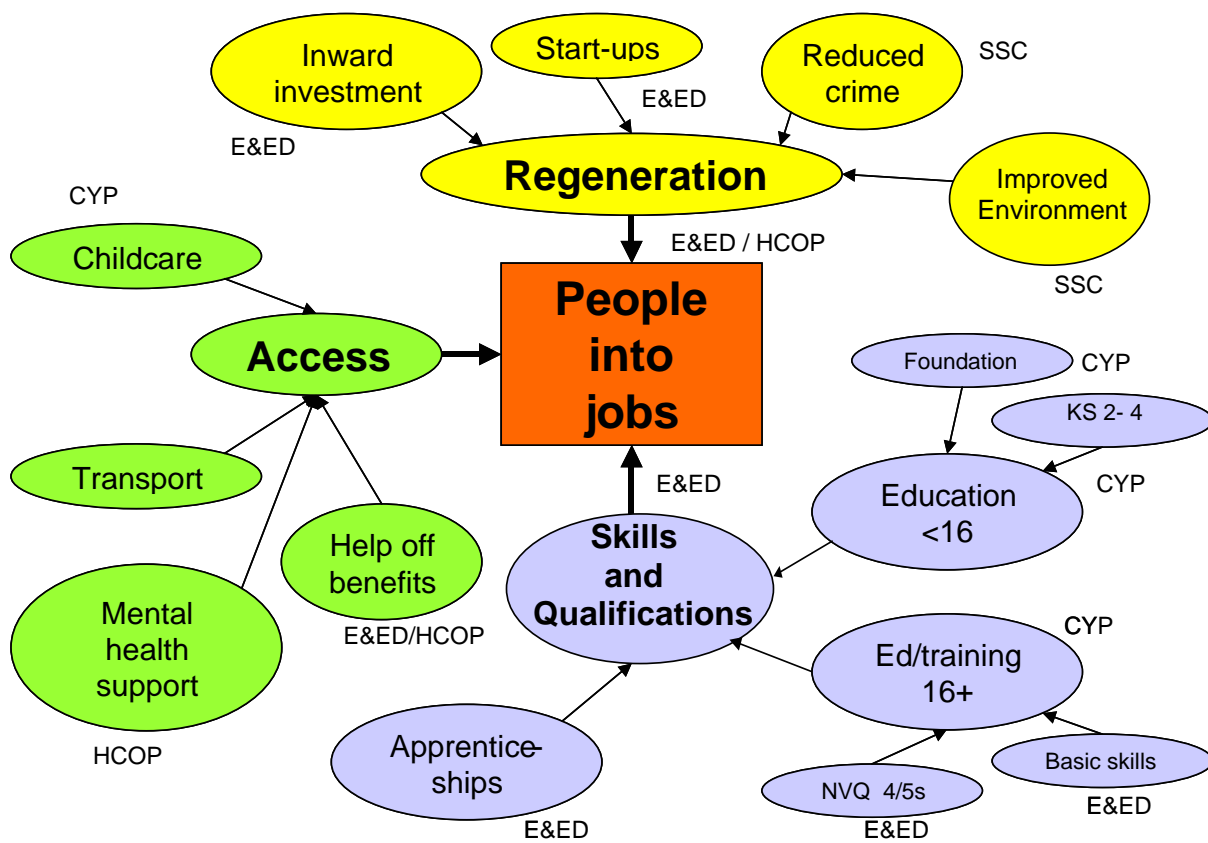
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Children and young people</b></p> <p>Teenage conception is above the national average and recent data shows it is not falling fast enough to meet our targets.</p> <p>Young people are more likely than any other age group to be victims of crime; nearly 8,000 each year.</p> <p>Educational attainment at 16 is now just below national average but some groups still achieve less than others, for example African-Caribbean and Pakistani pupils and looked after children.</p> <p>Too many children and young people have been involved in criminal activities; nearly 3,000 each year enter the criminal justice system.</p> <p>More than 1 in 10 young people are not in education, employment or training after 16.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Economic development and enterprise</b></p> <p>Rates of unemployment and rates of economic inactivity are above the national average.</p> <p>People from BME communities are more likely to be unemployed or economically inactive and less likely to have high level jobs.</p> <p>Employment rates for over 50s and people with no qualifications have increased more slowly than for other groups.</p> <p>The proportion of Birmingham residents without formal qualifications is well above the national average, while the proportion with high level qualifications is below the national average.</p> <p>The rate at which businesses in the city fail (as measured by VAT de-registration) is above the national average.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Healthier communities and older people</b></p> <p>Life expectancy is below the national average but improving - however improvements for men in Birmingham have been slower than nationally. Lifestyle and in particular smoking is a key factor and the city's rates are above average.</p> <p>Birmingham has high rates of infant mortality.</p> <p>Relatively few older people are currently helped to live at home (rather than in institutional care).</p> <p>The current focus on public services is on the most vulnerable older people at times of crisis rather than adopting an approach which enables the wider older population to remain independent as long as possible and live their lives to the full.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Safer and stronger communities</b></p> <p>Levels of crime are falling at a faster rate than nationally but are still above the national average.</p> <p>Recent surveys show that community safety remains the biggest single concern of local people although fear of crime has declined.</p> <p>Drug treatment provision has increased (number of GPs signed up to shared care services) but this needs to occur across the city in order to meet treatment targets.</p> <p>Death rates from accidents are reducing but are still above the national average.</p> <p>The council has a robust plan to meet the decent homes standard but this does not yet cover social landlords or vulnerable people in private accommodation.</p> <p>Surveys show that 86% of Birmingham residents want to take action to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Despite progress in the housing and business sector there is significant work to do to reduce emissions from the transport sector.</p>

In order to tackle key areas requiring improvement we have developed a suite of integrated outcomes and targets designed to achieve improvements to each of these areas which are set out in Appendix 1.

### Joining things up

Many of the actions needed to improve our city are closely inter-linked. For example: ensuring that young people have an education that suits their needs and abilities is likely to reduce truancy rates and assist them to get jobs, hence reducing the likelihood of these children being involved in crime; becoming victims of crime; misusing drugs; having unhealthy lifestyles; failing to achieve the skills and qualifications they need for a job; obtaining a job.

By way of example, we set out below in diagrammatic form the linkages involved in our priority of getting people into jobs draws on targets and actions across all four of the LAA “blocks” as illustrated below:



Given the complexity of the issues which the LAA is seeking to tackle, we have not mapped the myriad of interrelationships in detail in this document. Instead, we have indicated at the beginning of each Block where we believe the *key* linkages exist with other Blocks, and where therefore joined-up working across disciplines and agencies are particularly important. We have also indicated in the introduction to each Block which *key* cross cutting themes we consider each Block to be supporting – see Appendix 1.

## Summary of Key Outcomes

The key outcomes we seek for the people of Birmingham, together with examples of key targets, are listed below:

<b>Block outcomes</b>	<b>Key targets</b>
<b>Children and young people</b>	
<p><b>Healthy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fewer teenage conceptions.</li> <li>• More schools achieving the Healthy Schools Standard.</li> <li>• Young people's aspirations raised and health improved.</li> </ul> <p><b>Safe</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More timely assessments of vulnerable children and young people.</li> <li>• Fewer victims of crime under 18.</li> </ul> <p><b>Enjoying and achieving</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better educational achievement.</li> <li>• Young children ready for school.</li> </ul> <p><b>Making a positive contribution</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children and young people are better engaged.</li> <li>• Fewer first time entrants to the youth justice system.</li> </ul> <p><b>Economic well-being</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fewer young people outside education, training or work.</li> <li>• Young people ready for employment.</li> </ul> <p><b>More effective integrated and localised services</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better access to integrated support through Children's Centres and Extended Schools.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All schools achieving the Healthy Schools Standard by 2009.</li> <li>• Reduce the number of children and young people who are victims of crime by 20% by 2007/8.</li> <li>• Improve the performance of underachieving groups at 16.</li> <li>• Reduce first time entrants to the youth justice system by 5% by 2008/9.</li> <li>• Increase the proportion of 19 year olds who gain level 2 qualifications by 6 percentage points by 2008.</li> <li>• 60,000 under 5s and their families to have access to integrated support through Children's Centres by 2008.</li> </ul>

Block outcomes	Key targets
<b>Healthier communities and older people</b>	
<p><b>A healthier population</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give more babies a healthier start in life.</li>   <li>• Enable more people to enjoy healthier and longer lives.</li> </ul> <p><b>More independent living (in line with ‘Our Health, Our Care, Our Say’)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More older people and vulnerable adults living independently.</li> </ul> <p><b>Better management of long term conditions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better outcomes for people with long-term conditions.</li> </ul>	<p>Halt the increase in infant mortality.</p> <p>Prevent the gap in life expectancy from worsening.</p> <p>Reduce death rate from circulatory disease by 17%.</p> <p>Reduce death rate from cancers by 6%.</p> <p>More than double the numbers quitting smoking by 2009.</p> <p>Improved take up of benefits by older people by 2008.</p> <p>More people with learning difficulties and physical disabilities living independently by 2008/9.</p> <p>Older people have speedier access to social care assessment – target set at 90% by 2008/9.</p> <p>More than 5,000 people trained as expert patients, targeted on priority wards by 2008.</p> <p>Reduction of 6.6% in emergency bed-days by 2009</p> <p>42% reduction in number of delayed discharges 2009.</p>



Block outcomes	Key targets
<b>Enterprise and economic development</b>	
<p><b>Reduced employment differentials</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More economic activity and lower unemployment in the wards with the worst outcomes.</li> <li>• Improved employment rates for disadvantaged groups.</li> </ul> <p><b>Improved workforce skills</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The number of working age adults achieving basic skills qualification in the 11 NRF priority wards in Birmingham.</li> <li>• The number of working age adults achieving NVQ Level 3 qualification in the 11 NRF priority wards and in Birmingham.</li> </ul> <p><b>Increased entrepreneurial activity and competitiveness</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The difference in the number of VAT registrations and de-registrations (ONS).</li> <li>• The number of new businesses created and demonstrating growth after 12 months.</li> </ul>	<p>Five wards have unemployment well above the city average (some over 20%). We will reduce the differential between the target wards and the city average here from 12.5% to 11% by 2008/9.</p> <p>Reduce the differential between the employment rate for Birmingham and England from 8.4% in 2004 to 6.9% in 2007.</p> <p>Increase from 2980 in 2003/4 to 5149 in 2006/7</p> <p>Increase from 3517 in 2003/4 to 3843 in 2006/7</p> <p>100 more registrations than de-registrations by 2008/9.</p> <p>Increase from 120 in 2005/6 to 210 in 2008/9.</p>

Block outcomes	Key targets
<b>Safer and stronger communities</b>	
<p><b>Crime, reassurance, fear of crime</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced crime and re-offending.</li> <li>• Reduced drug misuse.</li> </ul> <p><b>Cleaner, safer, greener open spaces</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fire reduction.</li> <li>• Road safety improvement.</li> <li>• Reduced litter and detritus.</li> <li>• Improved satisfaction with local neighbourhoods.</li> <li>• Improved household recycling.</li> <li>• Reduced CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.</li> </ul> <p><b>Improved quality of Life in deprived neighbourhoods</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced homelessness</li> <li>• More “decent” affordable homes</li> </ul> <p><b>Empowerment of local people</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People feel they have more influence over decisions.</li> <li>• People from different backgrounds get on even better together.</li> <li>• More active citizens.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reducing recorded crime by 20% from 2003/4 to 2007/8.</li> <li>• Increasing from 2003/04 effective drug treatment for prolific offenders by 10% by 2009.</li> <li>• Halving the percent of neighbourhoods with unsatisfactory levels of litter by 2008/9.</li> <li>• Doubling recycling rates from 15% in 03/04 to 30% in 2009/10.</li> <li>• Achieving the “decent homes” standard by 2010.</li> <li>• Encouraging up to 5% more people to volunteer their time by 2008/9.</li> </ul>

## **Innovation and flexibilities**

This agreement is not simply an aggregation of partners' plans and targets. It is a great opportunity to do things differently to get better results for the people of Birmingham. We recognise the need to “do things differently” and to “do different things” in order to deliver the step-change in outcomes this agreement seeks.

Where national rules and regulations get in the way of these radical improvements, we have already started negotiations with GOWM on how we can work more flexibly to overcome them.

Our proposals for innovations and for flexibilities are outlined in Appendix 1 to this paper.

Our requests for freedoms and flexibilities include:

- Relaxing the requirement to include year-round 8-6 child care in every children's centre, enabling us to develop more relevant models for the most disadvantaged areas of the city.
- Better data sharing around people seeking employment and training, so that we can help people access this more effectively.
- Relaxing benefit rules in specified areas so that they do not stand in way of people getting trained and into work.
- Obtaining the discretion to target reduced business rates in deprived areas to nurture economic development and jobs.

Our intended innovations include:

- Developing a co-ordinated approach to providing “single point access” information, advice and advocacy to increase independent living and enhance the quality of life.
- Better joined-up working across agencies at a local level, developing multi-skilled teams located in shared buildings.
- Identifying and supporting budding entrepreneurs through schools.
- Working with and through the voluntary, community, faith and not-for-profit sectors.
- Developing “street champions” – volunteers to take responsibility for ensuring their local area is clean and safe.
- Harnessing Unpaid Work people do on community sentences to make areas cleaner and safer.

## **Priority areas**

In order to focus on “closing the gaps” we needed to identify a coherent set of priority geographic areas.

In the past, available analysis has largely been at ward level. We now have excellent information available at the ward level of around 25,000 people and are developing information at the “Super Output Area” level of around 3,000 people.

The following wards have been selected as those for which “closing the gap” targets across the LAA will be monitored. The wards were identified on the basis of a composite score expressing the number of LAA targets (across all four Blocks) for which each ward is a ‘closing gap’ priority:

Aston  
Bordesley Green  
Kings Norton  
Kingstanding  
Ladywood  
Lozells and East Handsworth  
Nechells  
Shard End  
Soho  
Sparkbrook  
Washwood Heath

Progress in outcomes will be monitored to evidence “closing the gap” between these wards and the city average outcomes. BME groups are disproportionately represented in many of these wards, many of which also have high rates of multiple deprivation, amongst the worst health outcomes, and highest unemployment rates in Birmingham. This approach will have positive race equality outcomes, as well as enabling us to tackle inequalities within the city.

These wards have amongst the highest Multiple Deprivation Index scores in Birmingham and in England. In nine out of 11 of the priority wards, over 76% of the ward population are in Super Output Areas (SOA's) that are amongst the 10% most deprived in England. Seven wards have over 80% of the population in such SOA's, and two have 97.2% and 98.9% respectively.<sup>1</sup>

Six of the eleven have more than 60% of the population drawn from the Black Caribbean or Asia groups<sup>2</sup>, and only two have less than 25%. Nine out of the eleven wards have unemployment rates above the Birmingham average of 8.4%, with four having rates of over 20% and a further four have rates between 14.6% and 18.6%.<sup>3</sup>

All priority wards have Long Term Limiting Illness rates above the national average (17.9%), all but one have rates above the Birmingham average (19.7%) and six have rates of more than 20%.<sup>4</sup>

A table giving statistical data for each priority ward against these general indicators of need is included in Background Paper 1: Rationale and Evidence.

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<sup>1</sup> Population Census 2001 – Population in Wards by IMD bandings.

<sup>2</sup> Population Census 2001 - The 2001 Census uses the term ‘Black Caribbean’ and three sub categories for Asian - ‘Bangladeshi’, ‘Indian’, and ‘Pakistani’.

<sup>3</sup> Birmingham Economic Information Centre/ONS August 2005.

<sup>4</sup> Population Census 2001, Limiting Long Term Illness.

For some targets, there are additional parts of the city with poor outcomes in particular areas. In these cases the individual target specifies which additional areas are involved.

During the first year of the Agreement, we will refine this analysis to look at smaller Super Output Areas to identify patches of poor outcomes within wards across the city, and looking at neighbourhoods which “make sense” to local people.

Detailed maps of the key target outcomes across the city, down to “Super Output Area” level, are being developed and shared with District Strategic Partnerships. These will enable very targeted approaches to achieving improvements in these outcomes.

Some of our neighbourhoods face particularly widespread and deep difficulties. Areas of the city already benefit from local initiatives such as the New Deal for Communities (in Aston and Kings Norton), the Housing Management Renewal Area (in Sandwell and E Birmingham) and the Enterprising Communities Plan. We will use a new government grant (the Neighbourhood Element) to co-ordinate local services and support community engagement, starting in neighbourhoods in the five eligible LAA priority wards (Bordesley Green, Kingstanding, Nechells, Sparkbrook and Washwood Heath) from April 2006.

The Sparkbrook area experienced a natural disaster in the “T4” tornado in 2005. In response to the destruction caused and the need to renew adjacent deprived areas in the affected neighbourhoods, which were indirectly affected, the Council, local communities, and key partner agencies have developed a “T4 Change Plan” to revive the affected area socially and economically. This T4 Change Plan, which complements the LAA, predominantly comprises the Sparkbrook ward, and is reflected in the relevant district led operations plan for the LAA. The Plan provides the framework for neighbourhood renewal across the affected neighbourhoods over the next ten years. It will employ innovative neighbourhood management practices and models to deliver sustainable change. This will include the reconfiguration of local public services so that they better meet the needs of local people, and thereby help to close the gap by reducing a number of deprivation differentials, which exist between the area and more affluent parts of the City.

## Developing our Local Area Agreement

We established robust arrangements to ensure the effective organisation of the development of our LAA, including:

- A **negotiating team**, chaired by the Leader of the Council, to ensure clarity with Government Office colleagues on what the LAA will deliver and what we need from Government to achieve this.
- A dedicated sub-group of the BSP Board to oversee development of the agreement and then to performance manage delivery. This sub-group, known as the **BSP Programme Board**, is chaired by the regional director of the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) and includes the Deputy Leader and Chief Executive of BCC; Chief Executive of two local Primary Care Trusts (PCT's); Chief Superintendent and the Cabinet Member for Lifelong Learning.
- A cross-agency **operational group**, chaired by BCC's Strategic Director for Local Services, including financial and performance management expertise, and the lead officers for each of the four LAA "blocks".

The voluntary, community and faith sector has been intrinsically involved with the development of the LAA. Birmingham Voluntary Service Council has led this process, including major consultation events and the establishment of four new fora for VCS organisations involved in each of the four "block" areas. It is intended that these will continue to support the implementation of the LAA.

Cross-cutting issues such as sustainability, equalities and cohesion, and community engagement, are mainstreamed into our LAA. To ensure that the outcomes and targets take account of these issues in a consistent way, we used expert lead officers on each cross-cutting issue to work with the four "block" lead officers.

The LAA has been developed through extensive engagement and consultation with partners and other stakeholders (For formal Statement of Engagement see Background Paper 2)

Further details of the organisation of our LAA and the engagement processes to date can be found in Background Paper 2 (organisation and engagement).

## Performance management and monitoring

Arrangements for performance management of the LAA were accepted by the BSP Board in October 2005. The LAA sets out clear targets for outcomes in the four thematic block areas and on key cross-cutting issues.

The BSP Board has delegated responsibility for developing and monitoring delivery of the annual operational plan to its Programme Board. The Programme Board will review delivery of the LAA targets and operational plan actions on a six-monthly basis, with lighter-touch intermediate quarterly reviews of financial performance.

The BSP and Programme Board is supported by a dedicated performance management capacity consisting of a senior manager and two performance analysts. They will continue to be supported by BCC's Corporate Policy and Performance Team, and by the inter-agency information and analysis group.

The performance management framework will be developed over time based on learning and experience as part of continuous review. The framework will be comprehensive, strategic and operational. It will test the vision and approach of the LAA, including its preventative, sustainable and targeted aspects, and the priorities. This will include taking account of, and making appropriate use of, existing and emerging city-wide, regional and national frameworks and initiatives that provide useful information and intelligence about the performance of the city. It will be designed to plan, monitor and review in real time and will include targeted and LAA-wide evaluations both through the BSP Board and where appropriate in partnership with central government and its agencies. During the first year of LAA we will develop an annual trajectory for each of the three years of the Agreement.

Districts have a key role in planning and performance managing the LAA. We have established clear processes for this for NRF funding in 2006-8 and are working with four pilot districts to work through how this applies to the wider LAA.

Designated thematic partnerships and District Strategic Partnerships will be responsible for the delivery of the relevant "block" outcomes of the LAA. Thematic partnerships are reviewing their arrangements to ensure these are "fit for purpose" to ensure delivery of the LAA. This may include deployment of dedicated partnership resources to manage delivery and further develop the agreement.

Responsibility for individual targets in the LAA will be clearly designated in the operational plan we intend to develop before the Summer, with particular lead partners with named lead officers. Each partner's normal accountability and corporate governance procedures apply.

The BSP Board has agreed to use the *Performance Plus* performance management system as a cross-agency technology to facilitate the tracking of key objectives and targets. This approach has been used successfully in phase 1 LAAs and a prototype specific to Birmingham was demonstrated to the BSP Board and GOWM in November 2005.

More details of our approach to performance management can be found in background paper 3 (performance management arrangements).

## **Corporate governance for managing the Local Area Agreement**

The Programme Board has approved an outline approach to corporate governance of the implementation of the Local Area Agreement. The approach involves significant further development of the BSP Board, thematic delivery partnerships and the accountable body role. The detailed proposals will be discussed with the BSP Board and a detailed action plan agreed with GOWM before April.

The role of Districts is clearly crucial to delivering the Birmingham Area Agreement. All districts will be involved in delivering relevant outcomes and targets. We are working with four pilot districts in 2006, to see whether the Area Agreement approach can be useful in our devolved arrangements. We hope to conclude outline agreement with the four pilot districts by April, so that the learning from the pilot can inform all our district planning from 2007 onwards.

## **Resources in the Local Area Agreement**

Partners are committed where appropriate to align the use of resources (including funds, personnel, buildings and land use) to support the aims of the LAA. Appendix 2 outlines our current thinking on aligning and pooling funding in the LAA. Our approach has been mainly to align funding in this first year, whilst the corporate governance arrangements above are put in place. We will seek to pool additional funding in years 2 and 3 of the agreement where this is helpful in achieving the outcomes agreed.



## **Summary of Compulsory Statement of Community Involvement**

Extensive consultation and engagement has taken place with the Voluntary and Community Sector. Background Paper 2 includes our Compulsory Statement of Community Involvement, and contains the detailed descriptions of the following:

- The governance arrangements for involving the Voluntary and Community Sector in the development of the Local Area Agreement;
- Summaries of the key issues arising from feedback from four major consultation events carried out on a Block-by-Block basis with the Voluntary and Community Sector;
- An explanation of how Voluntary and Community Sector will be critical to the delivery of the Agreement, together with key examples of Key Innovations and targets which demonstrate how community engagement is embedded within the Agreement.



# Local Area Agreements: Experience of Other Local Authorities

## Briefing from the Head of Scrutiny

### 1 Background

- 1.1 At the first Local Area Agreement Task and Finish meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2006, the suggested work programme included consideration of a possible visit to another local authority to ascertain areas of good practice where arrangements in place for partnership working and scrutiny involvement are thought to be working well. The Committee agreed that a preliminary investigation should take place initially to ensure that there was benefit to be gained from such a visit.
- 1.2 The Scrutiny Office invited 26 local authorities including London Boroughs, Unitary Authorities, County Councils, Metropolitan Districts (all of which apart from Lewisham were Round 1 authorities) and all the Core Cities (of which only Sheffield was a Round 1 authority) to submit a response to a request for information.
- 1.3 The context of the scrutiny review and the two main expected outcomes were outlined, namely:
  - a set of transparent, efficient and effective arrangements for accountability and management of the implementation of the Agreement and
  - a clear framework for overview and scrutiny of the Agreementand the authorities were asked for feedback on any areas of good practice in relation to their partnership working arrangements and the role of Scrutiny in their Local Area Agreement.
- 1.4 Responses were received from 16 (62%) local authorities as can be seen in the attached Appendix which includes all of the replies received.

### 2 Findings

#### Partnership Working

- 2.1 Comments from local authorities regarding their partnership working arrangements were sparse.
- 2.2 In fact, only 7 responses included examples of partnership working as set out below.
- 2.3 **Sheffield's LAA** was built on a well-established LSP, 'Sheffield First Partnership', which enjoys a high level of trust between partners. Every area has a Local Strategic Partnership which is supported by a Local Strategic Partnership Managers Team.



## Local Area Agreements: Experience of Other Local Authorities

- **Sheffield First Partnership** is made up of a group of 12 partnerships which form a family of partnerships, overseen by a main Sheffield First Partnership Board.
- **Area Action** is one of this family of 12 partnerships. Sheffield is divided into 12 Action Areas, each of which has an Area Panel involving local councillors, a co-ordinator and a senior lead officer within the Council. These come together to make up the “area action” element of the Sheffield First Partnership structure and allow a connection between city-wide ambitions and what happens in local areas. They have a brief to improve the quality of Council services in the local area and to get agencies working together as a team to address local priorities
- Sheffield embarked on its Area Action initiative in 1995 and since then has developed a well established infrastructure of Area Panels engaging all of the City's 84 Councillors in 12 corporate areas. Every Area Panel receives an NRF allocation. Following consultation with colleagues, partners and the public Area Panels then produce a Local Action Plan that describes how they intend to allocate funds to local projects and organisations.
- **Links between partnerships** are clear. Each partnership has a nominated link person or champion on the Sheffield First Partnership Board who is expected to provide a communication route between the main Sheffield First Partnership Board and the partnership concerned and provide feedback in both directions. Each partnership also has at least one postholder who agrees to attend the LSP Managers Meeting.
- The LAA is seen as a vehicle to get funding, reporting and agencies all in one place – a way of making partners work together. Neighbourhoods are expected to work towards the aim of the City Strategy rather than the mechanism of the LAA.
- Neighbourhoods provide performance data which is used to measure progress in closing the gap between the most and least successful neighbourhoods.

2.4 **Liverpool LSP** has been restructured to make it simpler. There used to be the Liverpool First Board and the Liverpool Partnership Group Board whereas now there is a small Executive Board and a wider Forum of 40-50 people whose membership includes representatives from the voluntary and community sector. The new structure appears to be working well but it is still early days. Their LAA is not yet operational.

- Liverpool also has a web-based performance management system, which is to be rolled out to the Liverpool Partnership Group (LPG) so that partners can also input data onto the system. They are currently proceeding with devolution and it is intended that the web-based system will also be used as a performance management tool at neighbourhood level.
- (Note – Birmingham City Council also have a web-based system, Performance Plus, which is, due to be rolled out to BSP partners before Christmas.)

2.5 **Hammersmith and Fulham** said that Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) were setting up Local Public Service Boards (LPSBs) to have responsibility for scrutinizing the performance management



of the LAA, exercising a challenge function where milestones appear to be going “off-track” and identifying where additional support may be required to help local partners deliver LAA outcomes.

- 2.6 **Wolverhampton** holds an annual scrutiny work-planning event which involves Members receiving presentations on key priorities for the coming year to spark debate on developing the annual work programme, which Members lead themselves through discussion groups on the day. Co-opted Members are also invited to attend and, as a result of a review conducted into partnerships, the LSP will also be invited to contribute to opening presentations to allow partnership priorities to be built into the scrutiny work programme. A further extension of this approach will be to present information on analysis of the Neighbourhood Action Plans, which is currently under development.
- 2.7 Various authorities rely on methods such as co-options, involvement of expert witnesses and consultation exercises to embed partnership working and the involvement of partners in scrutiny.

### 3 Scrutiny Involvement in the LAA

- 3.1 Analysis of the responses revealed that most local authorities are at a very early stage of introducing formal arrangements for scrutinising the LAA and, indeed, in many cases there are no formal arrangements in place for scrutinising the LAA and no plans to establish any at present. It appears that some local authorities have been awaiting the publication of the Local Government White Paper before deciding what to do.
- 3.2 Where scrutiny involvement has been initiated, it usually falls within the following categories -
- The scrutiny committees/panels are organised so that there are four scrutiny committees which are aligned to the LAA blocks and receive quarterly or half-yearly performance reports. In some cases, an O&S Management Committee will receive a regular co-ordinated report on key performance issues.
  - In some cases responsibility for the scrutiny of partnership activities is divided amongst the existing scrutiny panels.
  - In Bristol, monitoring of progress against targets will be reported from the Delivery Groups of the partnership to Scrutiny Commissions on a 6 monthly basis with a report from the Chair of the Delivery Group.
  - In Nottingham, the O&S Committee will oversee the development of the LAA. A Performance and Resources Panel will monitor progress on a six-monthly basis where the Council’s Head of Partnerships and the Chief Executive of the LSP deliver an overarching presentation on progress and Block Leads give a short presentation on what has not been achieved and what is being done about it.
  - Wolverhampton is actively considering the possibility of establishing a separate scrutiny committee for partnerships and external funding to scrutinise partners. They will be producing a report on partnerships in January which will give more detail.



# Local Area Agreements: Experience of Other Local Authorities

- Other work in progress – Doncaster is currently undertaking a review of the paths of accountability of non-council LAA partners. Whilst Wolverhampton, is currently in discussion with their LSP about how to take forward recommendations of a scrutiny review of partnerships and the proposals in the Local Government White Paper around strengthening external scrutiny and the duty to co-operate.

## 4 Conclusion

- 4.1 From the evidence gathered it appears that it is too early to establish if, where local authorities have implemented scrutiny arrangements for monitoring the LAA, those arrangements are robust and, therefore, examples of good practice.
- 4.2 Wolverhampton is a Round 1 pilot LAA authority who would appear to be slightly ahead in terms of looking at the way they work with partners and putting scrutiny arrangements in place. It may be useful for the Committee to have sight of their report on partnership working which is currently being prepared. It should be finalised in January.
- 4.3 Sheffield, as you might expect from a Round 1 Core City, would appear to be ahead in terms of arrangements for accountability, governance and a performance management framework for the Local Strategic Partnership. Their arrangements seem to have addressed some of the issues around communication, linkages and engagement with local areas and local councillors which have been emerging from the evidence presented to the Committee to date.
- 4.4 There may be lessons to be learned in terms of the links between the partnerships and engagement of local areas and local councillors. The Committee may wish to consider whether or not a visit to Sheffield is justified. We may be able to obtain sufficient detailed information and clarification through further research.

**John Cade**

**Head of Scrutiny**

**Contact Officers: Rose Kiely Tel 303 1730**

**Gail Sadler Tel 303 1901**

# APPENDIX



Local Authority	Partnership Working	Scrutiny Involvement in LAA
<p><b>London Boroughs</b></p> <p><b>Hammersmith and Fulham (1<sup>st</sup> Round)</b></p>	<p>The Local Public Service Board (LPSB) have responsibility for the LAA, pooled funding (i.e. approx. £35m spread across 4 blocks) and major decisions re cross-cutting issues. The LPSB reports to the Borough Partnership (BP). The 4 blocks are governed by partnership boards who feed in to the LPSB. Until now, no demands have been made on the LPSB to explain what they want to do with the funding or what they are going to do differently with the funding. Out of the 4 blocks 2 are strong (i.e. Children &amp; Young People; and Safer, Stronger Communities) and 2 are weaker (Healthier Communities &amp; Older People; and Economic Development). They are currently putting together a partnership – Public Health Strategic Alliance – to govern the Healthier Communities and Older People block.</p> <p>Economic Development – This block was only introduced in April 2006.</p> <p>The original governing board – Regeneration – was responsible for SRB funding which ended last year. The new Council administration wants to develop a different approach to Economic Development i.e. a 'physical' model e.g. new buildings etc rather than a 'social' model e.g. training people, and therefore governance arrangements for this block are currently under review.</p> <p>Pooled funding – the LA is the only partner pooling funds as there is a reluctance by other participants to do so. This is something they are working on.</p>	<p>No formal arrangements in place for scrutinising the LAA.</p> <p>Health &amp; Social Care Scrutiny Committee have received a report on performance around the Health and Community block.</p> <p>There is rapid change re the development of the LAA and, as yet, they haven't been able to put a programme in place.</p>



# Local Area Agreements: Experience of Other Local Authorities

<p><b>Lewisham (2<sup>nd</sup> Round)</b></p>	<p>Local Strategic Partnership – Conducted Scrutiny into partnership arrangements last year and made a number of recommendations which have been considered and reported back on by the LSP.</p> <p>Voluntary Action Lewisham held an event on 15 May 2006 to look at how voluntary and community organisations could get more involved in Lewisham's LAA.</p>	<p>Four Scrutiny Select Committees aligned to the LAA blocs have oversight of performance. They receive quarterly updates and a report on the work of the partnership.</p>
<p><b>Unitary Authorities</b></p>		
<p><b>Brighton and Hove (1<sup>st</sup> Round)</b></p>	<p>The LSP set up a Public Service Board (PSB) to take responsibility for scrutinising LAA performance management reports and for exercising a challenge function where milestones seem likely to be missed or going off-track, or where additional support might be required to help specific local partners deliver LAA outcomes.</p> <p>The PSB is serviced by the City for Living Performance Group, which is an officer group chaired by the City Council's Director of Strategy &amp; Governance. The group commissions and collects performance monitoring data from all relevant partners for inclusion in performance monitoring reports to the PSB.</p> <p>Full performance reports, covering all targets/indicators in the Agreement are reported every 6 months, timed to precede the completion of 6 monthly reports to Government Office. For targets/indicators where information can be collected more regularly (e.g. crime and ASB data), progress is monitored by the group drawing on information provided by service areas and partners underpinning the LSP and PSB.</p>	



County Councils		
<b>Derbyshire (1<sup>st</sup> Round)</b>		No existing formal monitoring arrangements by scrutiny of the LAA. Current monitoring only through reviews (on any subject but often in some way linked to LAA) and by monitoring County Council performance data on a regular basis in Committee.
<b>Devon (1<sup>st</sup> Round)</b>		Got no further in scrutinizing the LAA than members noting it as a topic they might look at.
<b>Suffolk (1<sup>st</sup> Round)</b>	<p>In Suffolk, the Accountable Bodies Group (ABG) provides the LAA with multi-agency accountability. This group consists of the leaders of all local authorities and Chairs of the Suffolk Development Agency, PCTs, voluntary sector infrastructure group, LSC, policy authority. It was originally intended that this group would be the body to allocate resources. However, since its inception government guidance has become clear that this responsibility must lie with the upper local authority. The ABG now makes recommendations to the County Council on how pooled funds should be allocated. Therefore, Suffolk County Council officially holds the purse strings of the LAA, but must consider the recommendations of the ABG when making decisions.</p> <p>More work needs to be done around embedding the priorities with the LAA into the planning processes of partner organisations so that more can be done to commit funds to the LAA.</p> <p>In Suffolk, the emphasis is placed on working jointly with partners to deliver. In this respect they would consider the 'duty to co-operate' as set out in the White Paper to be somewhat unnecessary.</p>	<p>Scrutiny Management Board decided that</p> <p>(1) the (yet to be formed) LAA Joint Scrutiny Panel should be given information about items on the County Council's forward work programmes for scrutiny, and</p> <p>(2) the Scrutiny Management Board should consider 'Information Bulletin's' from the LAA Joint Scrutiny Panel so that it can co-ordinate scrutiny work across these areas and avoid duplication.</p> <p>Scrutiny Committees and LAA blocks are aligned.</p>





# Local Area Agreements: Experience of Other Local Authorities

	<p>Some of the targets that have performed the best are actually those that they have worked on jointly with their partners.</p> <p>There is a strong sense of collective ownership of the LAA by both partner organisations and the County Council.</p> <p>Partners are actively engaged at all levels of the LAA. In addition, they have strong representation from the voluntary and community sector.</p>	
<b>Metropolitan Districts</b>		
<b>Bradford (1<sup>st</sup> Round)</b>		<p>Have 7 O&amp;S Committees, 4 of which are aligned to the 4 LAA blocks. Each of the 4 O&amp;S Committees receive performance reports on a 6 monthly basis.</p> <p>A co-ordinated report on what impact the LAA is making on key performance issues hasn't been done to date simply because there was no-one to co-ordinate it, but it is something they are looking to address.</p>
<b>Doncaster (1<sup>st</sup> Round)</b>		<p>Scrutiny Committees aligned to reflect both the LAA and the council's Corporate Plan.</p> <p>Scrutiny Committee Chairs and Vice Chairs meet monthly with Area Managers to formulate strategy at ward-level.</p> <p>A review of the paths of accountability of non-council LAA partners is currently underway.</p>



<p><b>Wolverhampton (1<sup>st</sup> Round)</b></p>	<p>Embedding partnership working and involvement of partners in scrutiny comes in the form of co-options, involvement as expert witnesses and through consultation to gather evidence.</p> <p>Annual scrutiny work planning event – This event has run for several years and takes the format of Members receiving presentations on key priorities for the coming year to spark debate on developing the annual work programme, which Members lead themselves through discussion groups on the day. Co-opted Members are also invited to participate in this event. One outcome of the Partnership Review is that the LSP will be invited to contribute to opening presentations to allow partnership priorities to be built into the scrutiny work programme.</p>	<p>Responsibility for monitoring the LAA arrangements is divided across the scrutiny panels.</p> <p>A Partnership Scrutiny Review has been undertaken resulting in recommendations being grouped around two strands for development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• strengthening Member engagement in partnership working</li> <li>• developing a dialogue between Scrutiny and the LSP.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Core Cities</b></p>		
<p><b>Bristol (3<sup>rd</sup> Round)</b></p>	<p>Neighbourhood partnerships link in to the Bristol Partnership through representation on the Regeneration Delivery Group. They do not have a structure of area committees.</p>	<p>Arranged a seminar for all scrutiny members (hosted by IdEA) to look at the LAA and facilitate a session where members could make general comments and understand what the LAA is and how it is developed locally.</p> <p>The LAA submission was considered by the O&amp;S Management Committee and members commented on the nature and appropriateness of targets and recommended a future way of monitoring the implementation and progress of the LAA. Future monitoring of progress against targets will be reported from the Delivery Groups of the Partnership to Scrutiny Commissions on a 6 monthly basis with a report from the Chair of the Delivery Group. O&amp;S Management Committee will receive</p>



# Local Area Agreements: Experience of Other Local Authorities

		regular reports on the progress of the LAA between now and April.
<b>Leeds (2<sup>nd</sup> Round)</b>		Currently undertaking a Scrutiny inquiry part of which looks at how the LAA fits in with other activities in terms of regeneration and closing the social deprivation gap. Also, how the Scrutiny process might offer challenge in terms of ensuring the objectives within the Vision for Leeds and LAA are translated into practical actions.
<b>Liverpool (3<sup>rd</sup> Round)</b>	<p>The LSP has been restructured to make it simpler. It now has a small Executive Board and Forum of 40-50 people including voluntary and community sector. Seems to be working well.</p> <p>Performance management – web-based system to be rolled out to partners.</p> <p>Neighbourhood performance management - the web-based system will also be used at neighbourhood level.</p>	Not looking to do any detailed scrutiny work on LAA at this stage.
<b>Newcastle (3<sup>rd</sup> Round)</b>		<p>Newcastle will implement its first LAA in April.</p> <p>Just started a review of their LSP and from a policy development point of view will be including scrutiny involvement in the Sustainable Community Strategy/LAA as one of the key elements. Should hopefully have some new scrutiny arrangements agreed around March/April.</p>
<b>Nottingham (2<sup>nd</sup> Round)</b>		In the early stages of implementing scrutiny arrangements for the LAA. 3 elements to scrutiny of LAA – 1) role of the O&S Committee, 2) role of the Performance & Resources Standing Panel, 3) role of the other panels. O&S Committee will oversee the development



		<p>of the LAA i.e. initial submission and subsequent refreshes.</p> <p>Performance &amp; Resources Panel will monitor progress of the LAA on a 6 monthly basis. First 6 months to be reported in November. At this meeting, the Council's Head of Partnerships and the Chief Executive of the LSP will deliver an overarching presentation on progress. Each Block Lead will give a short presentation on what has not been achieved that was expected to be achieved to date; why this is so and what is being done about it; what the key risks are to implementation and how these are being addressed. Also invited the Chairs of the city's themed partnerships and the Council officers who are scrutiny champions (1 for each panel). This meeting is being held 6 months in advance of the 6 monthly progress meeting with GOEM to ensure that scrutiny members have an opportunity to add their comments to the report that will be presented.</p> <p>The refresh of the LAA for 2007/8 will be taken to O&amp;S Committee when members are able to add their comments prior to presentation to GOEM.</p> <p>In December, each relevant O&amp;S panel will receive a report on progress and the refresh in relation to specific blocks with specific reference to implementation.</p>
<p><b>Sheffield (1<sup>st</sup> Round)</b></p>	<p>Built on a well-established LSP called 'Sheffield First Partnership' which enjoys a high level of trust between partners. Since signing the LAA, Sheffield and its partners have put in place a series of project and delivery boards to oversee the LAA. The Sheffield First Agreement Board for overseeing the Local Area Agreement and city-wide performance; the Sheffield First Agreement Officers Board Group for</p>	



## Local Area Agreements: Experience of Other Local Authorities

	<p>supporting development, implementation and performance management; Delivery Partnership Boards for delivery of the Agreement blocks and the Sheffield First Partnership Board which sets the City Strategy.</p> <p>Responsibility for individual targets in the LAA are designated to lead partners and named lead officers. The LAA is seen as a vehicle to get funding, reporting and agencies all in one place. A way of making partners work together.</p> <p>Neighbourhoods are expected to work towards the aim of the City strategy rather than the mechanism of the LAA.</p> <p>Neighbourhoods provide performance data which is used to measure progress in closing the gap between the most and least successful neighbourhoods.</p>	
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## Request for information re: LAA & Partnership Working at Sheffield City Council

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This note aims to provide information on the approach Sheffield is taking in relation to some of the issues being explored by the Birmingham City Council's LAA task and Finish O&S Committee.

Overall, it is worth noting that even though Sheffield has a strong Local Strategic Partnership and was a pilot LAA authority we have always seen building the LAA and the growing centrality of the process as a long-term activity. The landscape has, and continues to, change rapidly. Sheffield has tried to avoid seeing the LAA as a separate initiative as we see LAAs as eventually becoming the way business is done. The recent Local Government White Paper confirms this direction of travel but also raises issues for us as to how we organise ourselves in terms of policy and logistical support to ensure we make LAAs work for us in delivering the City Strategy.

### Linkages between Sheffield's Local Strategic Partnership and the Area Panels

Sheffield embarked on its Area Action initiative in 1995 and since then has developed a well-established infrastructure of Area Panels engaging all of the city's 84 Councillors in 12 corporate areas. The Panels are an integral part of the Council's political management structure and are at the heart of an approach that aims to:

- **Increase the local voice** - Regular public Area Panel meetings that debate and inform action on local priorities
- **Improve local service** - Established networks of link officers (from wide variety of services including those provided by partners) who are engaged in joint working and improving service responsiveness at the local level. Production of annual area plans that outline area needs, priorities and actions that have been agreed to improve on them.
- **Support local regeneration** - joint working with local regeneration boards, development trusts and forums to achieve a better fit between mainstream and community regeneration activity. Considerable investment of resources by Area Working in helping to strengthen local infrastructure for regeneration and neighbourhood renewal.

Area Action also involves working with Council services and other partners in developing their approach to Area Working. Each area also has a wide range of local organisations and other active community members. These come together to make up the 'area action' element of the Sheffield First Partnership (Sheffield's LSP) structure and allow a connection between the bigger city-wide ambitions and what happens in local areas.

Each area develops a 3 year Action Plan containing actions for local areas to address in relation to at least 3 key features of the City Strategy: Great Place to Grow Up; Low Crime and Environmental Excellence, as well as any other features which are deemed to be local priorities.

Action in local areas and neighbourhoods must support and be supported by Sheffield First Partnership and we are developing firmer and clearer links between the work of Area Panels, and other area-based activity and the work of Partnership Boards.

Neighbourhood working and the 'Closing the gap' policy are key aspects of our City Strategy and elements of all blocks of our Local Area Agreement. The SNIS (Sheffield Neighbourhoods Information System) has been developed to assist measurements of the success of the Closing the gap policy and is a key part of our Local area Agreement performance management framework.

### **NRF funding**

The Neighbourhood Renewal Fund allocation for Sheffield is £9.58million in both year 4 and year 5 (2004-2006). Key to the success of the NRF programme in Sheffield for the next two years will be:

- The delivery of mainstream services and the attainment of national floor targets.
- Targeting resources to ensure that we successfully close the gap between our most deprived areas and the rest of the City.
- Building on the foundations and successes from year 1 -3 of the NRF programme in Sheffield.

The allocations and areas of activity for years 4 and 5 have been agreed by the Sheffield First Partnership, Sheffield's Local Strategic Partnership following a process of consultation within the Council and with partners.

NRF has been pooled as part of the Sheffield First Agreement, though the Government continues to make payments through the original mechanism rather than as part of the LAA payment route. Depending on the future of NRF, we intend to treat all neighbourhood funding as a single pot. NRF reporting now takes place via the LAA mid year and end of year review process.

### **Commissioning to meet LAA targets**

Currently commissioning takes place through services and partnerships with the aim of meeting targets designed to meet the aspirations set out in the city strategy.

Although responsibility for ensuring the delivery of specific blocks of our LAA is delegated to partnership delivery boards, it would be fair to say that the LAA has yet to drive a substantial change in the way services are commissioned or that LAA targets are the prime consideration in commissioning. This however, will change as the LAA expands and the streamlined city outcome performance framework becomes established as the primary reporting mechanism, for partners within the Strategic partnership and externally.

It is likely that our current commissioning frameworks will continue to change if we are to take advantage of the opportunities such as flexible use of funding offered by LAAs. All partners require transparent commissioning and decision-making arrangements and we are currently working to ensure clear commissioning frameworks are in place, though this will not necessarily be the same for all partnerships depending on their delivery role.

## **Engagement with Members**

In the early stages of LAA development, Members (particularly those with responsibility in relation to partnerships within the LSP) were involved in a variety of workshops and events to work up the principal aims and activities for our LAA. The Council Leader (and Chair of the LSP) was a key player on the initial steering group, leads the Mid and end of year review teams and continues to Chair the Sheffield Agreement Board. This Board was established to oversee the development and performance of the Local Area Agreement on behalf of the main LSP Board.

Various briefings have been produced and presentations provided to Members. However, Members are generally less engaged in the LAA than we had expected. Key portfolio holders who are Chairs of individual Partnership boards within the LSP family sit on the Agreement Board but most Members have tended not to want to engage with the 'nuts and bolts' of the LAA. Indeed, feedback from Members' development exercises suggests that many Members are still unclear about our approach to the LAA and the benefits arising from it.

Again, we anticipate this will change as the LAA develops a greater profile within the Council and other agencies along the lines as described in the Local Government White Paper.

## **Accountability of pooled and aligned funding**

By virtue of CPA rating and pilot status Sheffield has been designated an LAA single pot area though we have chosen not to take advantage of the potential associated freedoms. This is both due to our view that our financial management systems are not yet 'fit for purpose' and also some concern over accountability issues with Government departments.

For LAAs to develop to their full potential and meet the new performance outcomes for the city, pooling and aligning mainstream funding is essential. When this involves major funding (well beyond the existing amounts of LAA pooled funding) governance and accountability will be significant issues.

A developmental audit of our LAA indicated the need for clearer accountability arrangements – all agencies wanted to be clear where decisions were made – as the LAA grows. The LSP has also sought to ensure that all the partnerships (delivery and championing) have clear terms of reference and governance arrangements. In addition, where relevant commissioning frameworks for each partnership are being upgraded to meet the audit requirements.

## **“Buy-in” by partners – funding other than NRF money**

From the start of the LAA we had significant strategic buy in from key agencies such as the PCT's (who led the health block), South Yorkshire Police and the Voluntary and Community sector. OFFER, our Community Empowerment network plays a key representative role on the Agreement Board and Officers Group.

Partner funding has been aligned to meet overall outcomes, though most has already been committed via pre-existing agreements.



## **What arrangements are in place for Scrutiny of the LAA**

Scrutiny and Policy Development Boards have explored aspects of the LAA as part of the scrutiny of key services within the Council and the LSP. However, to date, Scrutiny has not conducted an indepth approach to the 'blocks' or 'themes' of the LAA nor examined in detail the 'nuts and bolts' of the LAA.

The LAA has changed significantly over the past couple of years, and as it becomes more embedded in the work of the Council and partners, structures and processes are being put in place to ensure it works effectively. Scrutiny Chairs are currently looking at how to mainstream coverage of the LAA as part of their programme.

Michael Bowles  
Corporate Policy Unit  
Sheffield City Council  
Jan 2007

<b>Report to:</b>	<b>CABINET COMMITTEE – DEVOLUTION</b>
<b>Report of:</b>	<b>STRATEGIC DIRECTOR</b>
<b>Date of Decision:</b>	<b>26 JANUARY 2007</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>IMPLEMENTATION OF DIRECTORATES SERVICE PLANNING WITH CONSTITUENCIES – DEVOLUTION AND LOCALISATION ACTION PLAN R21</b>
<b>Key Decision: Yes / No</b>	<b>Relevant Forward Plan Ref: NO</b>
<b>Type of decision:</b>	<b>Executive / Non-Executive: Executive</b>
<b>Relevant Cabinet Member(s):</b>	<b>CLLR PAUL TILSLEY</b>
<b>Relevant O&amp;S Chairmen:</b>	<b>CLLR TIMOTHY HUXTABLE</b>
<b>Wards affected:</b>	<b>ALL</b>

<b>1. Purpose of report:</b>
1.1 To consider for implementation proposals emerging from Recommendation 21 (R21) to improve service planning synergy and outcomes between Service Directorates, Constituency Committees and Constituency Strategic Partnership.
<b>2. Decision(s) recommended:</b>
2.1 To endorse the roll out of Constituency Area Agreements during 2007/8 and for these to be in place for April 2008 (Appendix A – 3.1 and 3.2).
2.2 To endorse bringing forward the commencement of the planning cycle each year (Appendix A3) allowing for evidenced, informed and meaningful planning engagement between Directorates, Constituencies and partnership in delivering LAA targets (Appendix A - 3.3, 3.4 and 3.6).
2.3 That Constituency Committees be encouraged to consider creating Member portfolios to champion key constituency priorities to facilitate engagements with Cabinet portfolios and the service planning process (Appendix A - 3.5i).
2.4 To establish a protocol for informing Members of planned and emerging initiatives in their Wards. This should be introduced through a systematic Members briefing database of developments in their wards, as well as, issues of interest Members have requested to be kept updated on (Appendix A - 3.5ii).

<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Jagwant Johal – Constituency Director – Edgbaston
<b>Telephone No:</b>	0121 464 9197
<b>E-mail address:</b>	<a href="mailto:Jagwant.johal@brimingham.gov.uk">Jagwant.johal@brimingham.gov.uk</a>

### **3. Compliance Issues:**

3.1 Are Decisions consistent with relevant Council Policies, Plans or Strategies:

The decisions requested are consistent with the effective implementation and delivery of the Birmingham Community Strategy, Local Area Agreement targets and the Council Plan.

3.2 Relevant Ward and other Members /Officers etc. consulted on this matter:

The Deputy Leader, Cllr. Paul Tilsley, Cabinet Member for Local Services and Community Safety, Cllr. Jim Whorwood and the Corporate Management Team have been consulted in bringing forward these proposals.

3.3 Relevant legal powers, personnel, equalities, regeneration and other relevant implications (if any):

There are no staffing implications associated with the implementation of R21 proposals. Effective planning between Directorates, Constituencies and partnerships will contribute to the delivery of the City Council's equalities and community cohesion objectives and deliver vibrant urban villages.

3.4 Will decision(s) be carried out within existing finances and resources? Yes

The proposals aim to maximise existing resources assigned to service planning by creating a more linear process with wider ownership between Directorates, Constituencies, partnerships and Members for improved service outcomes.

3.5 Main Risk Management and Equality Impact Assessment Issues (if any):

The spine of the proposed service planning framework between Directorates and Constituencies is the LAA, which is already subject to a risk assessment. Constituencies also maintain their own risk assessment and service planning outcomes are risk assessed as part of this process.

The main risk in the implementation of R21 proposals is the processes not becoming embedded in the planning cycle due insufficient time. To prevent this, it is recommended that the proposals be implemented during the 2007/8 with their full effect being felt in 2008/9.

### **4. Relevant background/chronology of key events:**

See Appendix A

### **5. Evaluation of alternative option(s):**

- 5.1 Alternative options were considered as suggested in the R21 for Directorates to indicate in their service plans how they intended to work collaboratively with the constituency machinery. The latter would make Directorate service plans unduly lengthy if they had to cover all constituency activities related to their function. It is viewed more effective to limit such detail to Constituency Community and Service Plans.

**6. Reasons for Decision(s):**

6.1 To provide a response to R21 and ensure effective service planning outcomes between Directorates, Constituencies and partnerships involved in the delivery of the Community Strategy, Council Plan and LAA targets.

**Signatures (or relevant Cabinet Member(s) approval to adopt the Decisions recommended):**

Chief Officer(s): .....

Cabinet Member(s): .....

Dated: .....

**List of Background Documents used to compile this Report:**

1. Devolution and Localisation Scrutiny Report – July 2006

**List of Appendices accompanying this Report (if any):**

1. Appendix A - Background and Response to Recommendation 21
2. Appendix A1 - LAA Engagement with BSP, City Council and Constituencies
3. Appendix A2 - LAA Coverage of BSP / BCC Plans and Partnership Arrangements
4. Appendix A3 - Proposed Annual Service Planning Cycle

## Background and Response to Recommendation 21 (R21)

### R21

*“That all Directorates indicate in their service plans how they intend to work collaboratively with the Constituency machinery, including Constituency Committees and Constituency Strategic Partnerships, to deliver better services and improve citizen engagement.”*

#### 1.0 Background:

1.1 The D & L Scrutiny settled on Recommendation 21 because:

- Constituency Service Plans (CSP) in responding to the Constituency Community Plans (CCP) only did so by including localised services and not all Council services as had been intended.
- Constituency Committees could not see how non localised services were responding to CCP and the localisations agenda.
- Local Members expressed concerns of not being made aware of all the initiatives taking place in their Wards by Directorates, other public agencies and from partnership activity. This demonstrated a deficiency in complementary planning and reporting process between public sector stakeholders.

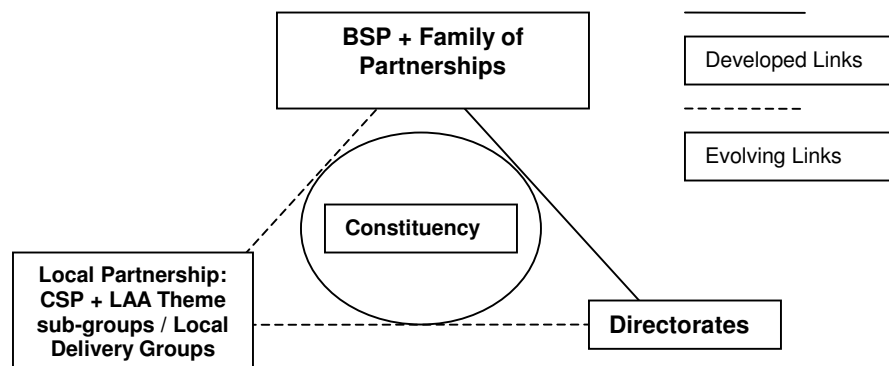
1.2 The above can be partly put down to D & L implementation and embedding problems. The D & L Scrutiny, in noting these teething problems, recognised that the City Council’s annual planning and engagement process needed to interlock with those of partnership arrangements.

1.3 Therefore, Recommendation 21 essentially seeks to address:

- Engagement between Strategic Directorates, Constituency Committees and Constituency Strategic Partnerships.
- How citizens’ engagement informs service improvements and feeds into a co-ordinated service planning process at a city wide and local level.

## 2.0 Responding to R21:

- 2.1 R21 seeks “all Directorates **indicate** in their service plans how they **intend** to work collaboratively with the Constituency machinery” To simply provide an indication and intention as to how Directorates will work with the constituency machinery will not result in the required outcome. The response needs to focus on how Directorates and Constituencies **complement each others roles and responsibilities** within context of partnership working they are engaged in.
- 2.2 Achieving service outcomes is not just an internal City Council matter, given the complex and dynamic partnership context. Constituencies engage with both corporate and local partnership arrangements with varying degrees of success. To date Directorates have mainly engaged at the corporate partnership level. However, all Directorates are now exploring how best to engage at a Constituency level by establishing clear protocols clarifying their service delivery and facilitation responsibilities in respective of Constituency functions and vice versa.



- 2.3 The corporate and local partnership interface, with the exception of the Community Safety Partnership and Local Delivery Groups, requires strengthening.
- 2.4 To ensure there are solid partnership and operational links between all the above requires alignment of engagement, planning, performance and reporting processes. This requires linear arrangements that are evidence based, outcome orientated, meaningful and understood by all stakeholders as to their roles and responsibilities.
- 2.5 The LAA provides the spine for the above in that it attempts to align partnership effort and resource to clearly defined outcomes. The achievement of the LAA is dependent on partnerships supporting the LAA Blocks, lead Directorates and Constituencies operating collaboratively. The mechanism to achieve this involves a number of steps:

### **2.5.1 Configuring partnership, agency and BCC planning machinery (Appendix A1):**

These should be mutually supportive, given the service outcome reliance all have on each other. No longer can BCC, Directorates and partners agencies operate their service planning in silos.

### **2.5.2 Integrate and streamline, BSP (*Community Strategy*), BCC (*Council Plan 2007+*) and LAA outcomes (Appendix A2):**

There is clearly an overlap between the theme/priority outcomes sought by the above. To an extent the Community Strategy informs the Council Plan and the delivery of both can largely be encompassed by LAA delivery Blocks. How these are pursued collectively and reflected in community and service plans both corporate and locally, needs bottoming.

Constituency Strategic Partnerships are already using the LAA Blocks to provide outcomes based framework for their Community Plans (2006-10). This approach has been adopted in anticipation of the existing four LAA Constituency pilots being rolled out across the city. Most Constituency Strategic Partnerships are also establishing LAA Block sub-group as part of their structure to support this process. These sub-groups clearly need to be linked back into the corporate partnerships and Directorate structures to achieve outcome focused services.

The LAA developments at Constituency level illustrate the immediate need to ensure developed links between Constituencies and Directorates, as well as, between city level and local partnership arrangements.

### **2.5.3 Capture of performance and engagement data to inform an outcomes based service improvement planning system (Appendix A3):**

BSP Partnerships via the LAA need to establish baseline evidence bases to inform their outcome based planning systems, which are relevant at a strategic and operational delivery level at a city, Constituency, Ward and neighbourhood level. The example set by the Community Safety Partnership's annual assessment needs replicating across other partnership arrangements that support the LAA.

### **2.5.4 Linking Consultation and Engagement into the planning system:**

Engagement and consultation is a key feature to citizens' engagement to determine what local needs and services improvements are required. BCC have a number of systems that aid this process which need to be brought together to provide annual intelligence to the planning process:

- Consultation and Engagement Strategy
- Annual opinion survey
- Service and client specific surveys
- Citizens Panel
- City Living Panel
- Customer First
- Constituency Consultation and Engagement Plans

The above report at different times of the year resulting in not all findings being pooled to inform forward planning. The Consultation and Engagement data base should help support this.

The Corporate Services Business Transformation Project currently underway should also support the capturing of performance and engagement data required for the planning process.

The Birmingham Strategic Partnership is also working towards the establishment of an Engagement Board to provide a single empowerment service for the city's communities and neighbourhoods. The views and perception of local networks linked to the empowerment service need to be locked into forward planning.

The engagement processes and opinion surveys undertaken by partner agencies should be complementary and shared to inform the collective planning process.

### **2.5.5 The engagement of Members in the planning process at a local level:**

All Members have a crucial frontline role and need to be engaged and lead of local initiatives. It is vital that they are kept informed of all initiatives from partnership arrangements, Directorates and Constituencies. The CCP and CSP should be the core annual reference documents on activities in the Constituency.

Some Constituencies have adopted evolving local portfolio roles for Members who then provide the Constituency lead for their respective portfolio.

Besides the regular briefings provided by Constituencies on the planning of CCP and CSP there are various performance databases, such as the Unified Planning Framework, Inform, and Performance Plus which can provide valuable information for Members briefings and their engagement.



### 3.0 Implementing R21

#### 3.1 Configuring partnership, agency and BCC planning machinery:

- 1) BSP Partnerships, agencies and BCC should agree a complimentary annual planning cycle, which allows for aligning and pooling resources to achieve LAA outcomes.

#### 3.2 Integrate and streamline BSP (*Community Strategy*), BCC (*Council Plan 2007+*) and LAA outcomes:

- 2-i) 'Constituency Area Agreement' (CAA) should be rolled out and provide the core template for Constituency Community Plans (CCP) and Constituency Service Plans (CSP). This should be designed to illustrate how both partnership / agency arrangements and BCC Constituencies are collaborating to achieve agreed outcomes. In addition to the core CAA template, CSP should respond to the following cross cutting themes:

- Customer focus
- Connected service excellence
- Community Engagement (duty to inform, consult and engage)
- Community Cohesion (inclusive of the Equalities & Diversity)
- Developing the Third Sector
- Prioritising neighbourhood action

- 2-ii) Directorate Service Plans should only broadly outline the collaborative arrangements with Constituency machinery given that the manifestation of this will be highlighted in both CCP and CSP.

- 2-iii) The CCP and CSP should also act as the core reference documents for Members and the public as to the range of initiatives taking place in their Wards and neighbourhoods.

- 2-iv) All Directorates should establish service delivery and facilitation interface protocols with Constituencies as to roles and responsibilities. These should be in place for March 2008.

#### 3.3 Capture of performance and engagement data to inform an outcome based service improvement planning system:

- 3-i) LAA Block Annual Reports should be introduced to accompany the annual LAA refresh process in February / March each year. This would provide a focus on what outcomes are being achieved and the gaps that still require targeting and closing.

- 3-ii) LAA lead partnerships and lead Directorates should create a space for engagement, analysis and forward planning between them and Constituencies on an annual basis. This would ensure that each outcome has a strategic corporate direction and local delivery focus. This should happen via the creation of a planning fortnight in June. Therefore, the planning cycle will commence earlier in the year, allowing space for greater analysis of key engagement processes and performance data between April - May to inform the collaborative forward planning process. (Appendix A3).

### **3.4 Linking Consultation and Engagement into the planning system:**

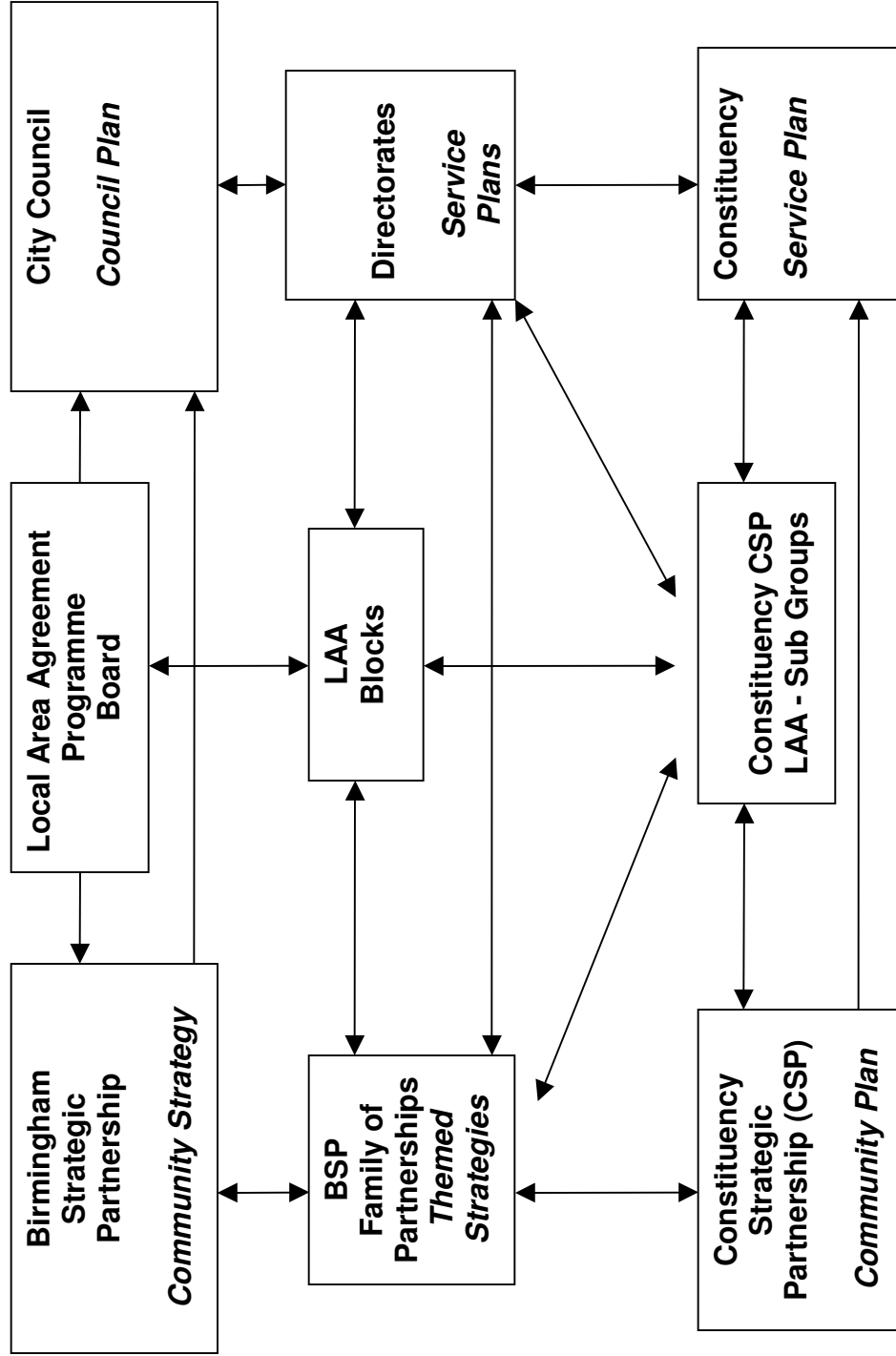
- 4-i) All consultation and engagement processes supporting service improvement should provide a collective data set for the planning fortnight in June (Appendix A3).
- 4-ii) All consultation and engagement undertaken corporately by partnerships and Directorates should be designed to provide analysis at Constituency, Ward and neighbourhood level. The latter should be configured to natural neighbourhoods as now defined by Constituencies, where appropriate.
- 4-iii) Partnerships and agencies should consider pooling resources to collectively undertake opinion surveys and feedback collectively. Where surveys need to be undertaken separately there should be a protocol to ensure that similar questions have standard wording to allow for comparison and continuity.

### **3.5 The engagement of Members in the planning process at a local level:**

- 5-i) Constituency Committees should explore the establishment of Member portfolios on local priorities. This would support Cabinet Member dialogue on such priority issues and greater Member engagement in the service planning process.
- 5-ii) All Members should systematically receive regular briefings on initiatives being introduced in their Wards and updates on issues they have requested to be kept informed of. A Members briefing register / database should be established to implement this.

### **3.6 Building Capacity to Respond**

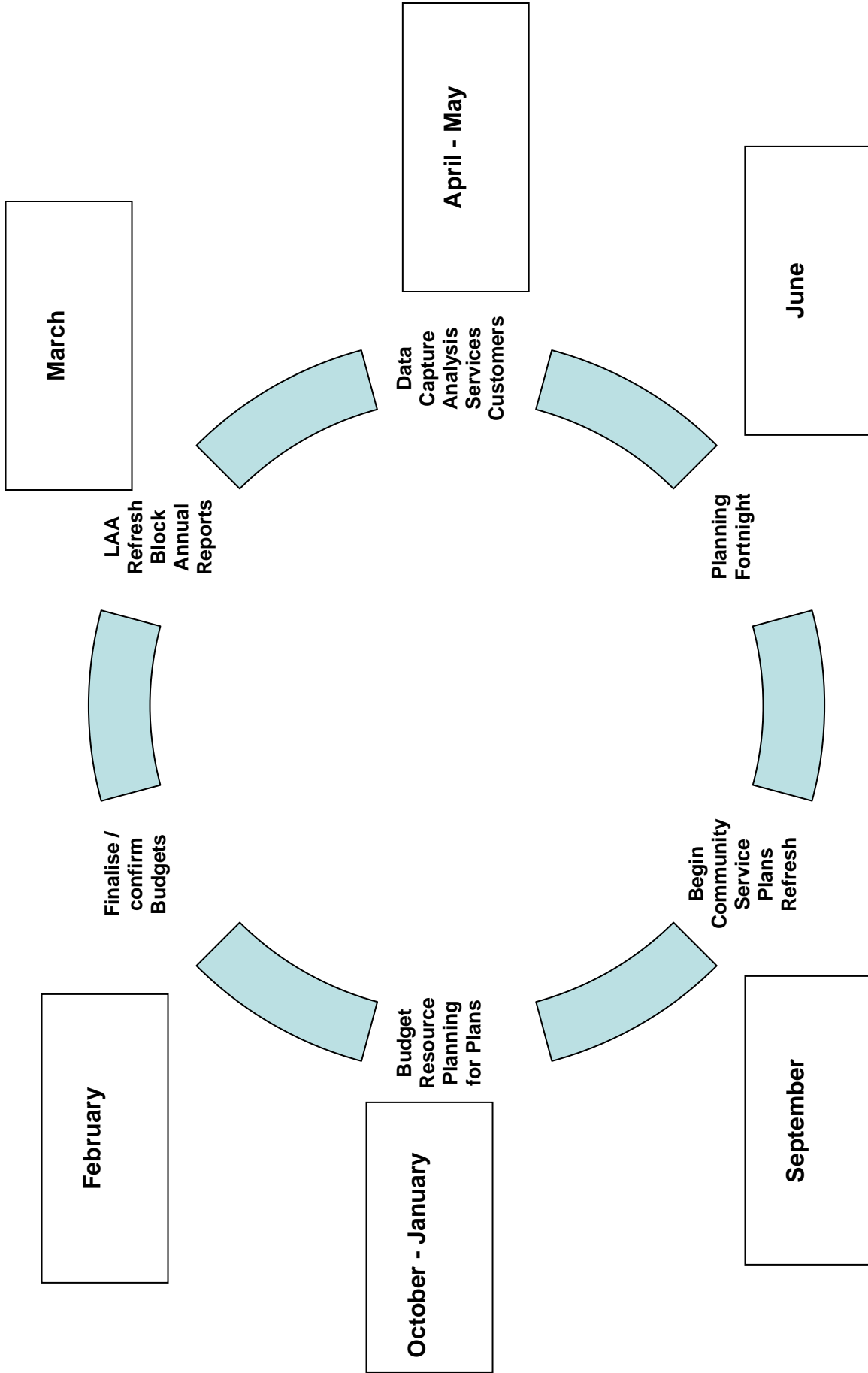
- 6i) Implementation guidance on proposals responding to R21 should be drawn up during the 2007/8 planning cycle and communicated to stakeholders, as aligned to R23 and R24 on Constituency Strategic Partnerships.



## LAA Coverage of BSP / BCC Plans and Partnership Arrangements

LAA Outcomes (Cabinet Portfolio)	BSP Community Plan	BCC 2007+ Aims & Priorities	Partnerships / Agencies / Directorates
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Stronger &amp; Safe Communities</b></p> <p><i>Local Services and Community Safety</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Housing</i></p> <p><i>Leisure Sport and Culture</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safe City</li> <li>• Sustainable City</li> <li>• Well Housed City</li> <li>• Diverse and Inclusive City</li> <li>• Flourishing Vibrant Urban Villages and Neighbourhoods</li> <li>• City of leisure and Culture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stay safe (A)</li> <li>• Enjoy a high quality of life (A) (clean, green + leisure opportunities)</li> <li>• Make the city cleaner, greener and safe (P)</li> <li>• Ensure everybody has a decent home (P)</li> <li>• Make their contribution (A)</li> <li>• Maintain a city where communities get on well together (P)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Community Safety Partnership</b></li> <li>• <b>Environment Partnership</b></li> <li>• <b>City Strategic Housing Partnership</b></li> <li>• <b>Culture Consortium</b></li> <li>• <b>Sports Participation Partnership</b></li> <li>• <i>West Midlands Police</i></li> <li>• <i>West Midlands Fire Service</i></li> <li>• Local Service Directorate</li> <li>• Housing Directorate</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Healthier Communities &amp; Older People</b></p> <p><i>Adult and Communities</i></p> <p><i>Leisure Sport and Culture</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City of Leisure and Culture</li> <li>• Healthy City</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be healthy (A)</li> <li>• Stay safe (A)</li> <li>• Protect &amp; support vulnerable people (P)</li> <li>• Enjoy a high quality of life (A)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Health &amp; Well Being Partnership</b></li> <li>• <b>Culture Consortium</b></li> <li>• <b>Sports Participation Partnership</b></li> <li>• <i>3 PCTs</i></li> <li>• Adult &amp; Communities</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Children &amp; Young People</b></p> <p><i>Children, Young People and Families</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning City</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make their contribution (A)</li> <li>• Succeed economically (A)</li> <li>• Stay safe (A)</li> <li>• Protect &amp; support vulnerable people (P)</li> <li>• Enjoy a high quality of life (A)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Children, Young Peoples and Families Board / Trust Arrangements</b></li> <li>• <i>Children's Fund</i></li> <li>• <i>3 PCTs</i></li> <li>• CYP &amp; F Directorate</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Enterprise and Economic Development</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Regeneration</i></p> <p><i>Street Services and Transportation</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Leader</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prosperous City</li> <li>• Connected City</li> <li>• National and International City</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Succeed economically (A)</li> <li>• Build reputation at home, nationally and internationally (P)</li> <li>• Promote a city region (P)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Economic Development Partnership</b></li> <li>• <i>Learning Skills Council</i></li> <li>• <i>Connexions</i></li> <li>• <i>Birmingham &amp; Solihull Chamber of Commerce</i></li> <li>• <i>Marketing Birmingham</i></li> <li>• Development Directorate</li> </ul>

# Proposed Annual Planning Cycle



# GOVERNMENT OFFICE FOR THE WEST MIDLANDS

## HIGHLIGHT REPORT ON BIRMINGHAM LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT

APRIL 06 – SEPTEMBER 06

### 1) Overall progress

Amber

From the risk assessment undertaken on performance at the six-monthly stage, the most likely outcome at the end of the three year period of the LAA is that a minority of mandatory outcomes, and other outcomes of key importance to the partnership, will not be achieved. This is based on achievement of the agreed targets at the end of the third year. (See Annex F of the guidance attached)

At the mid-year point just one outcome is risk-assessed as red (Employment Rate) and there are a number of mandatory indicators which also carry significant risk, including that for Key Stage 3 Education and Litter and Detritus. However, it should be noted that in other areas previously considered high risk, such as Male Life Expectancy, progress means there is now much cause for optimism for achievement of related targets and outcomes.

At the six-monthly stage 61% of indicators have been assessed as green for achievement of end of year targets, 15% as amber and 22% as red. Others have not been risk-assessed at this stage as they measure the perception of residents.

There remain a small number of indicators which have proved unworkable and these are being reviewed and revised as appropriate via the Refresh process.

Gaps in a minority of baselines and targets are, as previously agreed with the partnership, being addressed as part of the Refresh process. One or two gaps may remain in indicators, baselines and targets beyond the refresh process. This is due either to lack of clarity in guidance at a national level, (e.g. the adult element of the mandatory indicator on reducing re-offending) or a decision by the partnership to undertake more detailed analysis of the evidence base (e.g. private sector housing).

Essentially, the partnership's existing performance monitoring arrangements have enabled it to complete a fair assessment of progress and risk at this stage. In most instances the performance management arrangements demonstrate that planned action is or will be taken to deal with under-performance. These are being further strengthened, in particular the BSP is developing a challenge programme to specifically address these in a systematic way through partnership challenge and support as well as existing plans being re-assessed against best practice, evidence, plausibility and resource.

The Amber rating agrees with the partnership's self-assessment.

## 2) Direction of Travel

### Amber

This rating has been reached according to the following criteria as set out in the Six-monthly Review Guidance issued in October 2006:

- Amber - is addressing key weaknesses identified at sign-off but some of them remain

A number of outstanding issues and development areas were identified with the partnership in its Performance Improvement Plan for January 05 and on completion of the LAA process. These were summarised in a table of Forward Commitments.

The table set out over 30 key tasks to be completed by the end of September 06. The vast majority of these have been successfully addressed, including some important issues such as robust financial management arrangements, risk assessment framework, new governance arrangements, strengthened performance management and the completion of four Floor Target Action Plans followed by their implementation.

For some of these it is too early to judge if the impact of the action will be wholly successful – e.g. new governance and performance management arrangements are still being embedded and tested. This does not form part of the criteria for assessment and has not been taken into account.

In other cases, some vital to the successful delivery of the LAA, it is not clear what progress has been made, for example: review of communications and implementation of the recommendations, reviewing evidence of neighbourhood renewal on BME communities, improved availability of data on ethnicity in relation to outcomes, city-wide framework for LAAs at a constituency level, implementation of a strategic commissioning strategy, progress with development of small area data, continued development programme “raising our game” or similar agreed by the partnership.

Birmingham accepts the amber assessment as being consistent with the Review Guidance but remains disappointed not to be assessed as green, especially given the progress it has made and the establishment of a strengthened BSP Delivery Support Unit in the near future. It is also clear about the areas that are not accelerating their performance fast enough and has processes and programmes for addressing them.

### 3) Risks to the achievement of mandatory outcomes

For the following mandatory outcomes, as stated in Round 2 LAA Guidance, there is a residual risk that they will not be achieved at the end of the three year period of the LAA.

#### NRF Mandatory Outcome on Worklessness

In the LAA this is being measured using a number of proxy indicators as it is not possible to measure the outcome directly. The proxy indicators are around reducing numbers of JSA claimants to close the gap between priority wards and the city average and to close the gap between the overall employment rate for the city and the England average. However the risk remains significant as JSA Unemployment Rate continues to increase for the City overall and in most priority wards. Latest figures show a rate of 5.8 across the city, which is a 6.8% increase in the count in the last year. An analysis of the data for Feb 06 of WAC for the priority wards shows that the total number of claimants has increased in all wards since the previous year. The risk is that the scale of the challenge in bringing the most vulnerable people and deprived areas into the productive economy is too large in the current micro and macro economic climate.

The position with Worklessness has long been understood and in the spring and early summer of 2006 the partnership worked to produce a Floor Target Action Plan to address this. The plan was agreed with Government in June 06 and work has been underway to implement this over the summer and autumn. A review of milestones in November shows that progress with implementation is being made with some very difficult and complex issues being tackled systematically. Early achievements include the development of a multi-agency core implementation team that is starting to mobilise commitment and resources on both the client and employer sides of the labour market. Steps are also in place to develop robust priority ward plans with dedicated neighbourhood workers, extending a travel to work subsidy for people living in priority wards, as well as a pilot working with people with physical and mental health problems to overcome barriers to getting back into sustainable employment.

Partners across the city in response to the existing position are working together to strengthen the connections with mainstream investment and programmes so that opportunities and need can be more fully connected.

Furthermore, the work undertaken to produce the Floor Target Action Plan has been used to produce the City Strategy for the City Region approved by DWP in the summer.

NRA support is already in place to advise the partnership in implementing the Floor Target Action Plan.

Even with the actions in place and those still in development the most likely impact at the current time is that the rate of increase in JSA or WAC in the worst wards is, at best, stemmed.



### The NRF Education Mandatory Outcome

This outcome is captured as an indicator under the Enjoy and Achieve outcome. The risk remains that sufficient schools will not make enough progress in science. However, the direction of travel remains good with the total number of schools failing reduced from 23 in 2005 to 17 in 2006. It is worth noting that Birmingham has a total of 79 secondary schools.

Key interventions for KS3 include:

- GR8 2B KS3: Making the Grade at Key Stage 3 is a campaign that has been challenging schools to increase enjoyment and success for all Key Stage 3 learners.
- Transforming Secondary Education, including Key Stage 3, is central to delivery of Building Schools for the Future. The networks of secondary schools across the city, originally established as part of the Excellence in Cities initiative have been developed to support the collaborative and collegiate working of schools and colleges and the sharing and development of good practice and resources.
- Systematic intervention in schools judged to be a cause for concern using a schedule for school evaluation which identifies areas requiring particular support/intervention.

If current trends continue, the 2008 targets for all schools to achieve at least 50% L5+ will be achieved in English and Maths but not Science. However, the Partnership is confident that its planned interventions will enable it to achieve the target for all schools by 2008.

### NRF Mandatory Outcome on Liveability

The area of risk is in connection with detritus rather than litter. The partnership takes a very robust approach in performance management of this outcome. It uses ENCAM as independent assessors and latest results show a level of underperformance that will not be back on track by the end of the year.

It is proposed that the street cleansing service will move from a regime reliant on 'litter-picking' to one based on mechanical sweeping. To supplement this, the way in which the street cleansing service is resourced is being reconfigured. A training and development programme for the street cleansing workforce will reinforce these service standards and robust monitoring will evidence satisfactory performance.

Key interventions are expected to have performance back on track by March 08.

### NRF Mandatory Outcome on Health

This outcome is measured by a number of indicators covering life expectancy, infant mortality, circulatory diseases, cancer and smoking. The latter two areas present a risk to the achievement of the outcome. For cancer the latest data shows a slight under-performance against the trajectory for achievement of the LAA target and for smoking the latest data for quarter 1 is also below the trajectory. However Birmingham is optimistic that the figures for Q2 will bring it back on track.

In recognition of the scale of challenge generally in Male Life Expectancy the partnership has developed and is now implementing a Floor Target Action Plan. This contains interventions aimed at reducing smoking and milestones relating to a single city-wide call centre have been met. In addition there has been strong preparation for the smoking ban in 2007. Information packs and support is available for workplaces to ensure they are compliant with the new legislation.

The work on smoking will have an impact on cancer deaths in the long term.

It is expected that these actions and others more widely will result in reductions in premature mortality rates and closing the gap with the most deprived areas of the city. Indeed latest figures on male and female life expectancy across the city and related to closing the gap look encouraging.

#### **4) Risks to the achievement of other outcomes of key importance to the local partnership**

For the outcomes below there is a residual risk that they will not be achieved at the end of the three year period of the LAA. The risk is described and, where appropriate, the action being taken to address this, with an assessment of likely impact.

##### Children and Young People in Birmingham are Safer

The risk here is both to the number of children as victims of crime and the completion of initial and core assessments by Social Services.

There has been a reduction to the number of children as victims of crime of almost 6% over the past 12 months, with an improving 6 month trend, however at September 2006, performance remains behind target.

There is work underway to address robbery and public place wounding with a focus on young people as actual and potential victims. Other interventions being developed will include a focus on schools, travel routes and public transport. Initiatives developed during the 2002 Street Crime Initiative are being redeployed. The Birmingham Community Safety Partnership (BCSP) Core Priority Group for Young People provides the overarching co-ordination and commissioning of work to prevent offending by young people and identifies this as a key indicator. The core priority group has recently restructured to include young peoples substance misuse and the wider prevention agenda. This will improve the performance management arrangements of the relevant indicators and targets in the LAA.

Performance in completion of initial and core assessments by Social Services has improved over the second quarter, but not sufficiently to give longer-term confidence. There has been significant increase in demand particularly when compared with last year and social worker vacancies are currently running at 30%.

Action underway includes recent recruitment of 27 Social Work graduates under the final year bursary scheme and maximising this again for 2007. The expansion of the “grow your own” scheme of sponsorship of Social Work Assistants onto 3 year DIPS/W courses. Using agencies to head-hunt staff and do initial short-listing.

It is recognised that this area is very challenging but GOWM is reassured that the partnership is taking appropriate action to get performance on track.

#### Children and Young People in Birmingham enjoy and achieve

The risks here are around performance in achievement of 5 or more GCSEs grades A\*-G (incl English and Maths), the schools target for KS3 and disadvantaged White boys attainment of 5 A\*-C GCSE or equivalent (a large cohort).

Actions underway are included at section 3 of this report. Those schools with a higher proportion of disadvantaged white boys are participating in the Raising Achievement of White Pupils network which identifies shares and develops good practice and new approaches to improving attainment.

Birmingham has strong track record of targeted group support and it is expected that continued improvements will be made to performance across this outcome.

#### Children Young People in Birmingham achieving economic well-being

The risk here is around young people Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEETs) and those supervised by YOTs who enter education, training or employment.

There are ambitious local strategies in place to tackle NEETs, including rigorous follow-up procedures. There has been significant impact on tracking and providing appropriate support for all young people. As a result Birmingham might be able to achieve its 9% stretch target by year end and maintain performance in future years.

In relation to Young Offenders there has been no improvement in performance on the baseline of 70% and the current annual target of 83% is out of reach. However, Birmingham has been successful in winning ESF funding for 16+ training and the Connexions service is leading on this. Following a recent Youth Offending Service inspection, the partnership will need to consider developing a remedial action plan to give confidence about improved future performance.

#### To improve the quality of life independence, and well-being of older people and vulnerable adults

The risk to this outcome is specifically linked to residential care issues.

High level meetings have taken place to discuss issues around the Council's Housing Benefits policy and innovative ways forward are being seriously explored. Further actions include: a workshop is being held to

look at the medium term capital investment programme to support the development of Supported Housing capacity within Birmingham.

There is to be a review of the Project Plan for residential re-provision of homes directly under the management of Birmingham City Council. A Service Level Agreement is to be developed with Birmingham Mencap for Housing Pathways Service with clear performance target. A review of Supported Living funding for Learning Disabilities Services and level of access to Supporting People core funding is to be undertaken.

Birmingham's draft Commissioning Strategy for Services for People with Physical Disabilities was approved by Cabinet in November and will lead to an expansion in the range and choice of accommodation options for people with physical disabilities. A Service Plan will now be drawn up to implement commissioning intentions and support the achievement of this indicator's cumulative performance target.

At the review meeting both the Chair of the Health and Well-being Executive and Deputy Leader gave clear commitments to addressing Adult Social Care issues to improve performance but challenges remain considerable.

An increase in the number and improvement in competitiveness and sustainability of locally owned businesses and the development of entrepreneurial activity

It was not possible to report progress against this outcome at the six-monthly review as the existing indicators have proved to be unworkable. Furthermore, there is no evidence in the self-assessment of work that is underway to address this outcome. This issue was discussed at the review meeting. The conclusion to the discussion was that progress is being made, with both a planning framework and joint investment plan having been agreed between partners with an action plan to be in place from March.

The reality is that progress against this outcome will not be able to be assessed for another 12 months. It is critical that appropriate indicators are agreed as part of the refresh process.

## **5) The impact of the LAA and strong performance**

Below is a description of the key differences the implementation of the LAA has made.

As a consequence of the LAA the BSP has tackled a number of issues aimed at strengthening performance management and delivery:

- Building on the BSP Programme Board, which was established in September 05, new BSP/LAA governance arrangements have been put in place based around the Blocks along with a dedicated BSP Performance Team.
- A Governance Handbook has been produced, providing greater clarity about governance arrangements, inter-dependencies and delivery

- structures, including performance, risk and financial management with terms of reference for all the delivery groups in the delivery chain
- There has been strengthening and greater clarity about lead delivery partnerships for three of the four Blocks (Children and Young Peoples Board, Birmingham Economic Development Partnership and Health and Well-Being Partnership) and an emerging and new “Block” Board for the Safer and Stronger Communities Block representing five city-wide partnerships
  - A new cross tenure strategic Housing Partnership, responsible for ensuring delivery of the floor target action plan and other housing outcomes in the LAA was launched in October.
  - A new senior Performance Group is being established to support the BSP Programme Board in its role driving delivery.
  - A new BCC Executive Director of Policy and Delivery has been appointed and is working closely with the BSP Programme Board and Delivery Team. A new BSP Director is being recruited to further strengthen this team.
  - A BCC LAA Scrutiny Review has been established to add challenge.

The BSP is committed to further development and improvement. Much of this work is in its early stages but key areas being examined are: outcome planning, relationship management, improving challenge and support, engaging the ten constituency partnerships more effectively, further improvements to governance arrangements and improving the focus on neighbourhood interventions.

Further specific examples of the impact of the LAA and strong performance are given below by block:

### **Children and young people**

The Children and Young People Board is operational and strengthened by a Memorandum of Understanding between partners. A joint planning and commissioning infrastructure has been put in place to deliver integrated children and young people’s services through co-located multi-skilled, multi-agency teams, tailoring services for the most at risk, deprived and vulnerable children. This was a key commitment in the LAA. The reporting and monitoring structure in this block has proved effective in pulling together the self assessments for the recent JAR inspection of Children’s Services and LAA. In September the Children and Young People Board invited proposals for refocusing the terms of reference for the groups to strengthen links between planning and performance management.

Education services for both pre-school support and attainment for children and young people are continuing to improve, particularly for priority groups. The target to reduce the percentage of Year 11 not achieving any qualification has been met. There has been a 1.5% increase in the achievement of A\*-G including English & Maths. Black- Caribbean boys demonstrated excellent results with a 4% increase in-year to 43% achieving 5A\*-C (twice the national average improvement rate). Good progress with Looked After Children, with 20% achieving 5A\*-C in 2006 from 16% in 2005. Thirty-six extended provision clusters are now at the planning or delivery stage and agreed plans are in place for the

establishment of forty-three additional children's centres by March 2008, adding to the twenty-four created during 2004-06.

### **Healthier communities and older people**

Infant mortality and male life expectancy have dedicated floor target action plans to bring about long term change. There is evidence that the delivery of these plans is benefiting from strong self-management on a day to day level and from the strategic leadership of the Health and Well-being Executive. The Executive brings together the three Chief Executives of the PCTs with the Director for Adult Social Care and the Director of Housing. Practical examples of interventions made in the most deprived wards as a result of the LAA include relocation of community maternity staff to three children's centres, with the contract let to a Third Sector company, active case management through Birmingham Own Health, as well as re-design of smoking cessation service, free access to screening via pharmacies and Dr Foster "social marketing".

These examples are showing early signs that NRF-led activities are really starting to engage the NHS in service differentiation to meet the needs of different areas and priority groups. This commitment is reflected in that mainstream funding for future years for these activities has been secured despite NHS funding difficulties.

### **Enterprise and economic development**

The Birmingham Economic Development Partnership has been reviewed with new Terms of Reference and a management group established. Below this the Employment Strategy Group has been revised with new terms of reference. A multi-agency core implementation team is now in place to drive the Floor Target Action Plan and is starting to mobilise energy and resources on both the client and employer sides of the labour market. Action is underway to develop robust priority ward plans with dedicated neighbourhood workers, extending a travel to work subsidy for people living in our priority wards, as well as a pilot working with people with physical and mental health problems to overcome and understand the barriers to sustainable employment. Nevertheless the scale of the challenge remains huge and although this work is clearly a major priority facing the LAA, the actions that have been instigated are in their infancy. It will not be possible to tell whether the scale of the interventions is sufficient until the work beds in and starts to deliver. Skills are expected to increase well in line with targets as measured by qualifications.

### **Safer and stronger communities**

Agreed governance arrangements have recently been implemented to establish the SSC Board, representing each of the 5 city-wide partnerships who have a stake, as well as the major statutory providers. Of crucial importance over the next few months will be the recruitment of dedicated support staff to the Board to drive the agenda forward and enhance cross-partnership working.

This block has identified 42 priority neighbourhoods, based on a range of crime, ASB, fear of crime, fire and other indicators. A co-ordinator is in post to drive improvements in service delivery in the 42 areas. Developments and progress in partnership working at this local level has

resulted in positive linkages with the role-out of neighbourhood policing across the city.

Indicators for outcomes relating to improve the *quality of life for people in the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods* and to *increase the capacity of local communities so that people are empowered to participate in local decision making and are able to influence delivery* are performing better than expected with high levels of satisfaction being reported.

Birmingham's confidence in this area is demonstrated in its application for Beacon status in the Increasing Voluntary and Community Sector Service Delivery theme. An Assessment visit took place on the 28<sup>th</sup> November when Birmingham presented its case outlining the significant progress made in this area. The BSP has recently completed a comprehensive review of community empowerment services across the city, and is now implementing the recommendations.

Overall, crime is continuing to be driven down across the City and particularly in the most deprived wards and neighbourhoods. Drug treatment services, particularly for priority groups, are performing well. Good progress has been made in tackling homelessness.

A notable achievement is the joint working that has taken place between the Birmingham Environmental Partnership and the City Housing Partnership, in this block, leading to the installation of wind turbines and solar panels in more than 300 Birmingham houses in a unique drive to reduce CO2 emissions and tackle fuel poverty – both LAA indicators.

## **6) Missing information**

Gaps in any indicators, baselines, targets and trajectories relating to mandatory outcomes and where it remains unclear how these will be addressed are set out below:

The guidance from the respect task force states that data from the Local Government User Satisfaction Survey (LGUSS) must be used to set baselines and targets, and to assess performance against the Respect outcome. However this data is not yet available. The guidance also suggests that areas may wish to conduct more regular local surveys along the lines of the LGUSS survey and set local sub-indicators which relate to the Respect outcome, such local baselines and targets will be included in the refresh.

## **7) Other key issues for Government**

Key issues arising from the review that require government's attention are set out below:

Significant time lags remain in accessing data for important indicators including teenage pregnancy, deaths from circulatory diseases and cancer. These delays impact on effective performance management.

There is a shortfall in specialist social housing provision for people with physical and learning disabilities caused by a disparity between the lowest rents available from the key specialist social housing providers and the maximum amount of Housing Benefit payable under existing Housing Benefit policy regulation 14. This is proving a real barrier.

A major issue facing the partnership is the change to the Worklessness mandatory outcome and indicators from April 2007 which will, in affect, introduce a target that is way beyond anything achievable in the timescale set out. It would be helpful if DCLG colleagues would be prepared to negotiate a local target for the partnership that would present a more realistic challenge.

An issue has been highlighted by the BSP in relation to the LAA Grant Determination Letter and the DfES Standard Fund. As it stands the Local Authority has more flexibility in spending this fund if it remains outside of the LAA. If proposals go ahead to pool this fund from 07-08 the limitations on carry-over spend into the following financial year will restrict existing freedoms to spend this fund over two academic years.

Finally, the Partnership has raised a concern about the guidance for the Six-monthly review of LAAs, in particular the criteria set out in Annex E for the assessment of Direction of Travel. The Partnership has stated that "...direction of travel' as set out in the national guidance is misleading because it 'looks back' rather than 'look forwards' as one might expect. "

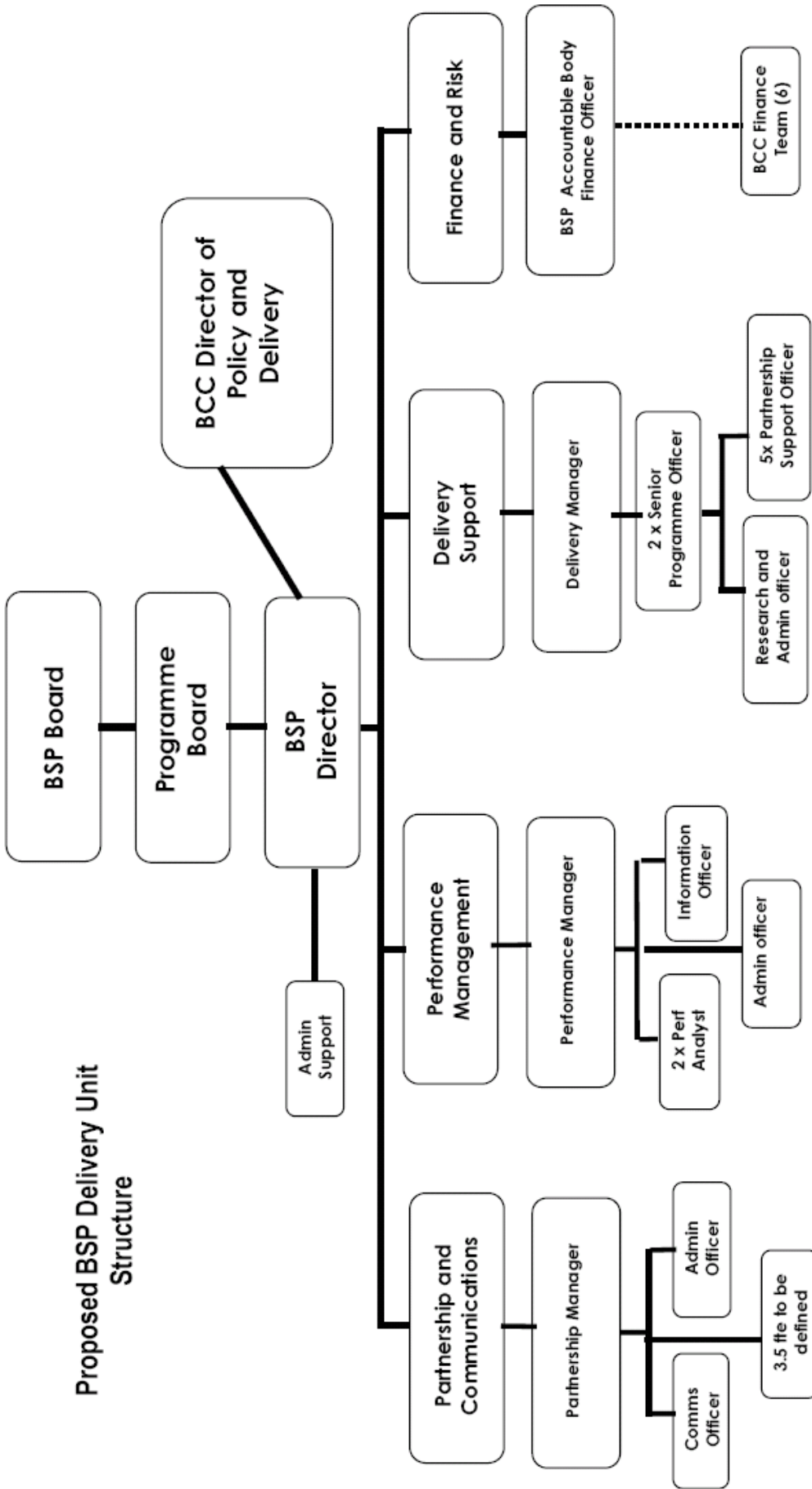


## OVERALL PROGRESS RAG RATINGS - DEFINITIONS

Red	<p><u>Any</u> of the following statements are true:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The most likely outcome at the end of the three year period of the LAA is that the majority of the mandatory outcomes and other outcomes of key importance to the local partnership will <u>not</u> be achieved.</li> <li>• There are significant gaps in the indicators, targets, trajectories or data relating to the majority of mandatory outcomes and other outcomes of key importance to the local partnership and it remains unclear how or by when the majority of these significant gaps will be filled or removed.</li> <li>• There are significant risks to the achievement of the mandatory outcomes and other outcomes of key importance to the local partnership of key importance to the local partnership and it remains unclear how the majority of these are being or will be addressed.</li> </ul>
Amber	<p><u>None</u> of the "Red" Statements are true but <u>any</u> of the following statements are true:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The most likely outcome at the end of the three year period of the LAA is that a minority of the mandatory outcomes and other outcomes of key importance to the local partnership will not be achieved.</li> <li>• There are significant gaps in the outcomes, indicators, targets, trajectories or data relating to a minority of mandatory outcomes and other outcomes of key importance to the local partnership and it remains unclear how and by when one or more of these gaps will be filled or removed.</li> <li>• There are significant risks to the achievement of a minority of the mandatory outcomes and other outcomes of key importance to the local partnership and it remains unclear how one or more of these are being or will be addressed.</li> </ul>
Green	<p><u>All</u> of the following statements are true:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The most likely outcome at the end of the three year period of the LAA is that all of the mandatory outcomes and other outcomes of key importance to the local partnership will have been met.</li> <li>• If there are any significant gaps in any of the indicators, targets, trajectories or data relating to any mandatory outcomes and other outcomes of key importance to the local partnership, it is clear how and by when these will be filled or removed.</li> <li>• If any significant risks remain to the achievement of any of the mandatory outcomes and other outcomes of key importance to the local partnership, there are clear measures in place which are most likely to address these risks fully if they arise.</li> </ul>

1. It should also be clear that because different LAAs include different targets the RAG rating given to each LAA will mean something slightly different and will not therefore be directly comparable. It would not be appropriate to attempt to rank different LAAs on the basis of these RAG ratings and central government will not do so.
2. It is also acknowledged that the definitions given in this guidance have evolved quite significantly from those included in previous guidance. The changes have been made to try to make much clearer which rating should be given in what circumstances. It is hoped that this will increase the consistency with which it is applied. But these changes do mean that RAG ratings should not and will not be seen as comparable with those for the second six-monthly reviews of the pilot LAAs.

Proposed BSP Delivery Unit Structure



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corporate Support</li> <li>• Relationship Management</li> <li>• Support for Partners</li> <li>• Promotion</li> <li>• Media</li> <li>• Event Management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performance reporting</li> <li>• Performance monitoring</li> <li>• Research and analysis</li> <li>• Challenge and peer review</li> <li>• Improvement programme</li> <li>• Good practice/what works</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Block Delivery plan support</li> <li>• FTAP delivery support</li> <li>• Plans for underperforming areas</li> <li>• Constituency support</li> <li>• Good practice/what works</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial Management</li> <li>• Accountable body function for LAA</li> <li>• Risk register</li> </ul>
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