

REPORT TO : **Tameside Strategic Partnership (TSP) Board**

DATE : 22nd June 2007

REPORTING OFFICER : **Steven Pleasant**
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SUBJECT : **LAA (Local Area Agreement) Update**

REPORT SUMMARY : The report provides the Board with an update on the development of the Tameside LAA, the priorities and performance measures identified by the four block negotiating groups and the performance management framework which will be used to monitor the LAA.

RECOMMENDATIONS : The Board note the content of the report, support progress made in development of the LAA and the performance management arrangements.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS : There are no direct financial implications as a result of the report.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS : The priorities within the LAA are drawn from existing work of the TSP Board and Thematic Partnerships. The effectiveness of the LAA and the achievement of outcomes against these priorities impacts directly on all the themes of the Community Strategy.

NEED FOR DECISION : There are no specific decisions for the Board to take arising from the report.

LINKS TO COMMUNITY STRATEGY : The LAA is an important element in the achievement of the Community Strategy and improving the quality of life in Tameside.

1.0 Tameside's LAA

- 1.1 Since the last TSP Board meeting (9th March 2007) the final version of the LAA has been signed. The signatures were the Leader of Tameside Council as the Chair of the TSP, the Chief Executive of Tameside Council and Ruth Kelly the Minister for Communities and Local Government.
- 1.2 The agreement became live on 1st April 2007. The performance monitoring processes are in place and underway.

2.0 Monitoring and achieving the LAA

- 2.1 In order to achieve the targets set out in the LAA the organisations responsible for delivery will need to closely monitor performance and ensure effective actions and resources are in place.

LAA Monitoring by GONW

- 2.2 The minimum requirement as part of the national Agreement is to complete six monthly returns to GONW that inform subsequent formal review meetings; and an annual review of the whole Agreement to consider any target adjustments and new performance measures.
- 2.3 The six-monthly review is a process through which Tameside reports on and discusses with GONW progress against all outcomes and targets contained in the LAA and spend. This is likely to take the form of a submission of evidence to GONW and to culminate in a meeting between Tameside and GONW, and the agreement of any necessary actions, which GONW reports to central government.
- 2.4 The annual review will normally take place in May of each year. The mid-year review will be in November and this will be combined with the DfES Priorities Conversation with the Council for services to Children and Young People. There is also the option of informal quarterly meetings in between the six monthly reviews if the area would find that useful.

Performance Management Framework

- 2.5 The performance management framework (PMF) supplements these mandatory requirements to ensure that timely action is taken to rectify any underperformance and maximise the use of resources across agencies, and learn from successful initiatives.
- 2.6 The TSP has an established performance management framework which has been central to the success of the TSP Board and Thematic Partnerships, and identified as a strength in the Annual Review process. Tameside's LAA will draw upon the embedded PMF, but with some additional elements to reflect the complexity and importance of the LAA. The specific LAA elements will be based upon the successful processes adopted to deliver Tameside's two Local Public Service Agreements.
- 2.7 **LAA Steering Group.** The LAA Steering Group will meet on a quarterly basis to review reports on performance, proposed new actions where improvement is required, and the success of actions already implemented. The Steering Group will have responsibility for approving the 6-monthly reports to GONW; overall spend against the LAA grant; re-negotiation of the LAA; and connecting activity in relation to the cross-cutting themes. Membership of the group will be based upon the Steering

Group which has negotiated the LAA. The lead officer from each Block will attend to report performance against their targets.

- 2.8 **LAA Block Groups.** Due to the large number of measures within the LAA, the achievement of the targets will be led by 4 different groups focusing on each of the LAA Blocks. Although the 4 blocks directly link into one or more of the 7 TSP Thematic Partnerships, the complexity and importance of the LAA suggests that detailed discussion regarding performance should take place outside the Thematic Partnerships. The Block Groups will meet at least quarterly and the lead for each Block will take responsibility for ensuring that appropriate systems are in place to gather data and maintain and monitor the 'actions' proforma for each target. A standard reporting template will be used to collate the information from each Block performance lead to report to the LAA Steering Group, Thematic Partnerships and TSP Board. Each performance measure will have a named lead officer responsible for achieving and monitoring performance. All data that can be monitored on a monthly or quarterly basis will be reported to each Block meeting. Where data is less regularly available, attention will focus on delivery of the actions to achieve improvement and any available proxy measures. The Block meetings will also discuss allocation of resources and monitor spend against the LAA grant. Where possible, existing groups whose work supports the aims of the LAA will take on the responsibility or assist with delivery of the block groups. For example; Spearhead, CDRP delivery sub groups.
- 2.9 **Thematic Partnerships.** Performance against the LAA will be reported to each Thematic Partnership every 6 months. The relevant Block lead (or theme lead for the SSC Block) will present the report. Each Thematic Partnership will take responsibility for overseeing the re-allocation of resources and adoption of additional actions to achieve the targets they have responsibility for. A standard template will be adopted to report performance to each partnership which will include additional information on actions to be taken to improve performance where necessary. The Partnership Agreement for each Thematic Partnership was updated by April 2007 to ensure all LAA performance measures were included.
- 2.10 **TSP Board.** Performance against the whole LAA will be reported to the TSP Board every 6 months by the LAA Steering Group. The Board will ensure that actions are co-ordinated across the LAA and that connections are being made between Thematic Partnerships and the cross-cutting themes. The Board will also hold each Thematic Partnership to account on progress against their performance measures through the Annual Reporting process. The Board may also request additional information through the six monthly LAA reports.
- 2.11 A flowchart of the PMF is attached at the end of this report.

3.0 Next Steps

- 3.1 The Tameside LAA went live on 1st April 2007. The next key milestone is the first quarterly performance reporting period, Quarter 1 – 2007/08. The LAA Steering Group will meet on 31st July to review Quarter 1 performance reports submitted by each of the four block groups. The block groups will meet prior to the Steering Group to analyse data and agree the content (e.g. commentary) prior to submitting their report.
- 3.2 A performance update report will be brought to the next TSP Board meeting on 21st September 2007.

4.0 New model LAAs

- 4.1 The Local Government White Paper 'Strong and Prosperous Communities' set out proposals to make LAAs central to the relationship between Government and local areas. Bring LAAs from the margins into the mainstream so that they can meet the challenges for stronger partnerships and place shaping in local areas.
- 4.2 Communities and Local Government (CLG) have issued a discussion paper 'Developing the future arrangements for Local Area Agreements'. The document is not final guidance but provides further thoughts on how the new LAA framework will operate, in particular the relationship with the new performance framework.

Proposals for 'new model' LAAs

- 4.3 The key elements of the proposed 'new model' LAAs are detailed below.
- 35 targets selected from the 200 measures in the new national PI set
 - 18 education and early years targets (mandatory)
 - Additional local targets dependent on priorities for each area (which do not need to be reported to Government)
 - Prioritisation of targets based on assessments of central versus local
 - Duty on named partners to have regard to LAA targets
 - Six monthly performance reviews replaced by one annual review
 - Annual reviews will inform CAA (Comprehensive Area Assessments) the proposed replacement for CPA, focusing on outcomes across the whole area and partnership not just the local authority
 - Opportunity to agree changes to targets (between Nov-Jan) with the Secretary of State to take effect from the following April
 - Economic Development to become Economic Development and Environment (including Culture)
 - Funding for local improvement should come from mainstream funding (e.g. Revenue Support Grant)
 - An area-based grant will be provided where this supports specific partnership priorities agreed with Government in the LAA
 - Some ring-fenced funding streams will remain but won't be reported through the LAA if they are outside the new national performance framework.
- 4.4 The original proposal was for all areas to have signed a 'new model' LAA in March 2008 to go live from 1st April 2008. In that way all local areas would have a three year agreement running concurrently.
- 4.5 This timetable is unlikely to be achieved as it is linked closely to the development of the new national performance framework and the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR07). The Government has said the CSR will not be completed until later in the year and as such this impacts on the timetable for agreeing 'new model' LAAs.
- 4.6 The impact of these changes on Tameside's LAA should not be significant. The LAA does not need to be re-negotiated. The priorities and outcomes agreed and signed off in March 2007 will continue. Some work may be needed to adjust the structure and mechanisms of the agreement to bring it into line with the 'new model'. However the LAAs overall aims and objectives will remain the same and continue to support the achievement of the Community Strategy.

5.0 Appendix – LAA PMF Flowchart

LAA Monitoring Structure

