



**Report of Lorraine O'Donnell, Assistant Chief Executive
Cabinet Portfolio Holder Councillor Simon Henig, Leader / Councillor Clive
Robson, Deputy Leader**

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide Cabinet with an update on the first Review of the County Durham LAA (2009 -11) and outline the timetable for completion.

Background

2. The new framework for LAAs involves an annual 'Review' to be carried out in the Autumn/Winter by Government Office on behalf of Government. This is followed by the opportunity to revise LAA indicators and targets in March 2009. This is known as the LAA 'Refresh'.
3. The first part of the Review was completed in September 2008 and the second phase of the Review was sent to Government Office on December 2008. The County Durham Partnership and five thematic partnerships put together information to respond to both the first and second phase of the Review. These reports indicated that a positive start has been made to deliver against the LAA targets, new and innovative ways of working are being developed to address priorities and work is on-going to fill any data gaps.
4. The final element of the Review is due to be completed and submitted to GONE by early March 2009. This must include any proposals to change LAA indicators or targets. The Government does not expect many of the LAA targets to be renegotiated during the three year lifetime of the LAA unless there are compelling reasons for this. County Durham already has the maximum number of designated indicators (35), if a new indicator is introduced one will need to be removed from the LAA.
5. The County Durham Partnership agreed that the Refresh element of the Review should focus on:
 - Capturing the vision and political aspirations of Members of the new authority.
 - Ensuring that new priorities identified via the JSNA, Community Safety Assessment and review of the County Durham Economic Strategy are captured within the LAA.
 - Holding an event to provide the opportunity for key partners and thematic partnerships to share their plans for 2009 – 11, ensuring that no key emerging priorities are missed.
 - Gathering evidence of delivery arrangements for all designated indicators.
6. An event was held on 10 September 2008 to allow thematic partnerships and key organisations to highlight emerging priorities that should be taken into account in the

Review/Refresh of the LAA. This event also provided the opportunity for partners to consider issues emerging from the JSNA, review of the Economic Strategy and the Community Safety Assessment. The information shared at this event provided confirmation that the LAA has captured the right issues for County Durham.

7. There are some important issues that were discussed in detail during the development of the LAA which need to be monitored over the year ahead, these are:
 - Child poverty
 - Breast feeding
 - Early years – readiness for school
8. Issues emerging that had not previously been considered by the Partnership are:
 - End of life care.
 - Counter terrorism.
 - Children with complex needs.

It has been agreed that these issues should be monitored during 2009/10 by the relevant thematic partnership with a view to adding as designated or local indicators in the LAA in 2009/10 if this is considered appropriate.

Vision and Political Aspirations:

9. As part of the LAA Review/Refresh process discussions have been held with Cabinet and Members of the Overview & Scrutiny Management Committee. The aim of these discussions was to ensure that the LAA captures the issues that elected Members consider to be important and believe would ensure that the County moves forward in accordance with their aspirations for the area.
10. Overview & Scrutiny members raised the issue of highway and footpath maintenance, particularly linked to the issue of accessibility. They also raised the potential need to review economic and housing (affordable housing and homelessness) targets to reflect the impact of the economic downturn. Cabinet members concluded that as the LAA is based on robust evidence no changes should be made at the present time. Members of the new authority have not yet fully developed their vision and aspirations for the future of County Durham. This will be done over the year ahead and is likely to have a strong influence on the next LAA Review. They also noted that the outcome of the Place Survey was not yet available and this information should be used to guide any future changes.

Next Steps & Timetable:

11. The following timetable for completion of the LAA Review/Refresh has been set:
 - Cabinet confirm decision on LAA Refresh (5 Feb 09)
 - County Durham Partnership final consideration of Refresh (23 Feb 09)
 - Full Council sign off of Refresh and delegation of decisions regarding Place Survey targets (27 Feb 09)
 - Place survey results due (8 March 09)

- Negotiation on LAA Place Survey targets with Government Office (March 09)
- Place Survey targets agreed as delegated by Full Council (March 09)
- Changes submitted to CLG (March 09)
- Refreshed LAA in place for 1/4/09

Conclusion and Summary:

12. Following a comprehensive review it is proposed that the LAA 2009 – 11 designated and local indicators remain unchanged, but the Council should initiate further negotiation on the economic and housing targets.
13. Work to complete baselines and targets will be completed by the thematic partnerships following receipt of Place Survey information.
14. Full Council will be asked to sign off the LAA in February 2009.
15. A request will be made to Full Council to delegate agreement of outstanding targets to the Leader in discussion with the Chief Executive.

Recommendations

16. Cabinet is recommended to agree the arrangements as set out above in paragraphs 12 to 14.

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Appendix 1: Implications

Local Government Reorganisation

Agreement of the LAA and future reviews will be undertaken by the new council.

Finance

n/a

Staffing

n/a

Equality and diversity

Issues related to equalities and diversity have been taken into account in agreeing the LAA priorities.

Accommodation

n/a

Crime and disorder

Key issues relating to addressing crime and disorder have been taken into account in agreeing the LAA priorities.

Sustainability

A full sustainability assessment of LAA priorities has been undertaken.

Human rights

n/a

Localities and Rurality

The needs of specific localities and rural areas will be addressed through work to achieve priority outcomes.

Young people

Priorities of the Children's Trust have been taken into account in agreeing the LAA priorities.