

LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT REFRESH

PORTFOLIO RESPONSIBILITY: CORPORATE STRATEGY & FINANCE

CABINET

19 MARCH 2009

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

To approve the Refreshed Local Area Agreement for submission to the Secretary of State for approval.

Key Decision

This is a Key Decision because it is likely to be significant in terms of its effect on communities living or working in Herefordshire in an area comprising one or more wards.

It was included in the Forward Plan.

Recommendation

THAT the Refreshed Local Area Agreement be approved.

Reasons

1. The Refresh of the Local Area Agreement brings up to date any baselines and targets which were not available at the time of the original agreement, thus ensuring that the latest submission has the most recent and relevant information.
2. It gives an opportunity to revise targets which have been adversely affected by the current economic downturn, negotiating fresh targets where appropriate.
3. It gives officers another opportunity to consider existing targets in line with the recently published Reward Grant Guidance and amend/adjust them where appropriate

Considerations

4. All targets within the Refreshed Local Area Agreement have been negotiated and agreed in consultation with relevant lead officers and partners.
5. Decisions are still awaited on the following national indicators: NI 17 (Perception of Anti Social Behaviour), NI 110 (Positive Activities) and NI 171 (New Business Rate). An update will be given to Cabinet once these are agreed. Access to Services indicators are still being discussed but these are local indicators and as such not in

Further information on the subject of this report is available from
Chris Bucknell, Acting Partnership Manager on (01432) 261789

scope for Reward Grant.

6. Following submission, targets will be “locked down” and will be used when calculating the Reward Grant in 2011. The exception to this will be those indicators which are deemed to be at disproportionate risk due to the current economic downturn. These will remain unlocked and a further opportunity for negotiation will be available in 2010. Only the latest negotiated targets will be used to calculate Reward Grant. The following targets fall into this category and will remain unlocked and can be revised if appropriate
 - NI152 - Working age people on out of work benefits
 - NI155 – Number of affordable homes delivered (gross)
 - NI 171 - New business registration rate
7. Refreshed LAAs will be submitted to the Secretary of State between Friday 27th March and Wednesday 1st April 2009.

Legal Implications

8. All target setting negotiations have taken full regard of the LAA Operational and Statutory Guidance and the Target Negotiation Briefs issued by central government.

Financial Implications

9. Funding will need to be targeted at achievement of the agreed targets and indicators.
10. Work needs to be done with partner organisations to ensure that mainstream budgets are identified and aligned with achievement of the targets within the LAA.

Risk Management

11. If the refresh process is not carried out effectively and does not meet Government Office expectations or timelines there will be a reputational risk for Herefordshire which may affect future relationships with regional or central government. This risk has been mitigated by close adherence with the guidance issued by CLG and compliance with the submission deadlines agreed with Government Office.
12. If the opportunity to refresh the indicators, baselines and targets is not recognised, and evidence to support this process is not robust, there is a risk that targets will not be achieved and Reward Grant not maximised. This risk has been mitigated by working closely with all stakeholders throughout the process in order to ensure that targets are agreed and owned by Directors and Lead Officers.

Alternative Options

Councils, as lead body for their respective Local Strategic Partnerships, are required to enter into Local Area Agreement. Alternative local indicators could be selected, but those incorporated within the agreement have been identified through a process of negotiation.

Consultees

Herefordshire Council Improvement Managers

Policy and Performance Service
Lead officers across partner organisations
Joint Management Team
Herefordshire Partnership Board
Herefordshire Partnership Management Group
Government Office thematic leads

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Refreshed Local Area Agreement

Background Papers

- None identified.