Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) and Local Area Agreements (LAAs) Theme Guide
‘Local Strategic Partnerships (LSP) and Local Area Agreements (LAA)’ learning exchange

Date: Thursday 2 October 2008
Venue: Hyatt Regency, Birmingham
The cost of the event is: £99 plus VAT, (totalling £116.32).
Book online at the Beacons website:
www.beacons.idea.gov.uk
Contact: beacons@idea.gov.uk

This event brings together all the beacons in the theme of ‘Local Strategic Partnerships and Local Area Agreements’: South Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council, Leeds City Council, London Borough of Croydon. The main focus for the day is on beacon workshops, providing an unmissable opportunity for networking and exchanging ideas.
‘Good public services are essential to strong and prosperous communities’ is the key message of the Local Government White Paper.

However, many areas are facing tough problems such as economic decline, deprivation and historic under-investment, which are not easily addressed by agencies working in isolation. The Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) is seen as the vehicle for developing this shared vision and for tackling the hard and cross cutting social issues for local areas.

While they are not statutory bodies they bring together public, voluntary, community and private sectors to co-ordinate how they can effectively tackle their local priorities. Within the LSP family there is a range of thematic delivery partnerships. This includes the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership and Children’s Trust – responsible for tackling specific agendas and delivering service improvements.

For LSPs to be really effective they need to be strong, robust partnerships of equals, working strategically together. They deliver the objectives of the Local Area Agreement (LAA) and the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) in a clear and accountable way.

To do this, they need to have in place a clear governance structure able to identify trade-offs and take different decisions. Within this structure the local authority will play an established strategic leadership role, and with clear roles and responsibilities established for all members. The LSP needs to be able to agree and enforce real change in the partner organisations.

As the LSP will be the place to determine what change is necessary, it is critical that elected members play a key role in the partnership and its decision-making.

All areas have developed a Local Area Agreement which requires the LSP and its partners to enter into detailed discussions about how best to focus activity. Strong LSPs have ensured that there are implementation arrangements for the LAA outcomes that are owned by all partners – included community representatives. LSPs demonstrated progress towards achieving these agreed objectives, together with processes for identifying risks to achieving success.
Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) and Local Area Agreements (LAAs) Theme Guide

Beacon authorities are here to help

The Beacons have an important role in working with other authorities, Government Departments and the IDeA to support learning and improvement. Between March 2008 and June 2009 the three Beacon authorities for the theme will be planning and delivering a wide range of events, products and support to councils to help drive improvement in ‘LSP and LAA’.

There are many benefits for you and your authority in engaging with beacons. These range from being able to network, learn about best practice and get the opportunity to work alongside some of the best services in the country to close peer mentoring relationships.

The three Beacon Authorities from this theme will be working closely with Beacon authorities from the other themes and other agencies to ensure we provide support that both meets your needs and avoids duplicating what others are doing. In particular the Beacons will focus their activities over the coming year on sharing, seeking and developing best practices in:

- Improving partnership working and relationships
- Implementing LAA objectives and priorities
- Engaging partners from other sectors
- Engaging elected members in LSPs
- Developing strategies for Comprehensive Area Assessments

Key messages and top tips for ‘LSPs and LAAs’ are provided by each authority throughout this guide. If you wish to follow up on any specific aspect of an individual approach please feel free to contact each authority directly (contact details are contained in each section).

For more information

For more details and the latest information on the ‘LSP and LAA’ Beacon year, please visit www.beacons.idea.gov.uk or contact:

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Authority overview

We are passionate about making the Borough a better place to live, work and visit. The Council is the largest employer in the Borough, employing 7,014 people. There are 54 councillors: 31 Labour; 12 Independent; 5 Progressive; 3 Liberal Democrat and 3 Conservative. Cabinet members’ portfolios are directly aligned with our priorities.

We put people at the heart of our services and work closely with elected members, partners and neighbourhoods to deliver real value and choice. We have a strong record of improvement as evidenced via the Comprehensive Performance Assessment framework. For the second year running we have achieved four stars in our CPA assessment and are improving well as an authority.

Our 54 members, 7,014 colleagues and numerous partners work with and for our 151,000 residents to focus on our priorities, via our “One Team” approach. We achieve this with the Spirit of South Tyneside, which incorporates the Sustainable Community Strategy, the Regeneration Strategy and our Local Area Agreement.

What has been achieved?

We have completed a two-year £6.4m “Supporting People into Work” programme. A comprehensive programme of intervention has been developed and delivered with the South Tyneside Enterprise Partnership, including Job Centre Plus to address key unemployment issues in the Borough.

Our Mouth of the Tyne Festival, staged jointly with North Tyneside and funded by the Culture 10 programme, attracted over 60,000 visitors and received a Silver North East Tourism Award in the Best Visitor Experience Category.

Our pass rates have increased faster than the national average and are now in line with national averages despite our high levels of deprivation. The proportion of pupils obtaining at least 5 GCSE’s grade A* to C increased significantly from 51.7% in 2005 to 55.5% in 2006.

South Tyneside’s reduction in teenage pregnancies in recent years is the second highest in the country and the highest in the North East. The conception rate shows an overall reduction of 37.6% between 1998 and 2008. This achievement, led by the South of Tyne & Wear PCT, means the Borough has closed the inequality gap, as the level is now the same as the national average.

Our Anti-Social Behaviour Task Force is working alongside the ASB Unit and other partners to improve performance. Our most recent survey found that 28% of people in the borough believe there is a high level of anti-social behaviour, down from 49% in 2004.
The Police have performed exceptionally in reducing burglary and also developed ‘Police and Communities Together’ that gives people a greater say in how neighbourhoods are policed.

The Tyne and Wear Fire Service undertook 2000 home fire risk assessments during 2007/08 in partnership with ST Homes.

Childhood Obesity Strategy has introduced a variety of interventions such as a Youth gym, Healthy Schools Programme, healthier school meals and the MEND programme that helps families with the knowledge to become fitter and healthier for life.

South Tyneside Recycling Village was crowned winner of ‘Civic Amenity Site of the Year 2007’ and we have secured funding of over £2m for a South Tyneside warm zone to tackle fuel poverty in areas of deprivation.
Top tips for Service Delivery

- Total Partnership - partners going beyond their traditional remit and doing what ever it takes to deliver priorities

- An effective listening campaign – South Tyneside’s ‘We asked, You said, We did’ campaign has proved a highly effective way of finding out what our residents’ priorities are, and acting on them

- We have taken a partnership approach in delivering our Wellbeing agenda, which has already made a difference to people’s lives in South Tyneside

- Elected Members work in partnership with each other across political boundaries and democratic area boundaries at Community Area Forums and Scrutiny

- Strong relationships have developed through the development of shared priorities, which are reflected in partners’ plans

- Strong representation from the private, voluntary and public sectors

- A strong focus on priorities and delivering outcomes

- Carried out successful initiatives such as participatory budgeting, participatory appraisal and an innovative Local Area Agreement

- A strong business membership within the Local Strategic Partnership

- Enabling people to identify their own neighbourhoods, not those determined by area or ward boundaries

- The strength and maturity of the relationships between partners

- The seamless integration of the LSP, sustainable community strategy and the Local Area Agreement.

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London Borough of Croydon

Authority overview

Croydon is a unique settlement within London, and indeed the country, in that it constitutes a large local urban economy in its own right but is enveloped within the metropolis that is Greater London.

Croydon covers an area of 87km2 and with 340,000 residents it has the largest population in London encompassing densely populated urban areas as well as significant areas of green belt. There are nearly 84,000 young people – more than any other borough in the capital.

Croydon has a rich and diverse culture but also has both deprived and wealthy areas - extremes that lead to a range of issues in terms of social cohesion, health, and crime. Our communities speak more than 100 languages and ethnic minority groups make up 36% of our population.

We also have excellent transport links which are important in terms of maintaining the borough’s position as a premier retail and commercial location. Croydon Tramlink is London’s only local tramway.

In Croydon we have embarked on one of the most dynamic regeneration programme in the UK with over £3.5 billion of development investment committed and in the pipeline.

In Croydon we have adopted the model of the Strategic Partnership being the complete family of partnerships comprising of a Board, Chief Executives’ Group and Theme Partnerships.

What has been achieved?

Croydon’s approach to partnership working has led to some impressive results. Partners have agreed shared priorities and ensured funding is available to deliver the programmes required to achieve these priorities.

Croydon has been able to pool and draw in resources to develop a wide range of innovative solutions to tackle complex problems and improve outcomes for local citizens. Highlights amongst these include:

- Europe’s first integrated **Family Justice Centre**
  - In 2005 Croydon developed a specific task group, (with Police, local Authority, Primary Care Trust, Probation, and Voluntary/Community sector organisations/partners) to identify and implement a working model which would effectively tackle the extremely high proportion of Borough domestic violence related crimes and murders. The model carries the concept of agency co-ordination and partnership working to a previously unachievable level
London Borough of Croydon

- **Croydon Enterprise** - promoting enterprise within Croydon’s most deprived communities. Croydon enterprise was established in 2006 in response to the Government’s Local Enterprise Growth Initiative (LEGI). The programme was awarded £77 million of government fund for over ten years making it the largest LEGI programme in the country.

- The award-winning **HAP<25** project addressing youth homelessness - Croydon’s work in tackling the issue of homelessness amongst young people in the borough has earned it the distinction of becoming a Centre of Excellence for Youth Homelessness. This multi-agency scheme offers a primary point of contact for young, single homeless people in the borough and provides an integrated service including support, mediation and advice on education, training and employment.

- **Reduced Crime**: Improved partnership working, through the Safer Croydon Partnership, has resulted in a steady reduction in crime over the last 4 years. Through partnership and the flexibility created by aligning crime funding budgets, joint crime reduction initiatives are contributing to significant reductions in certain types of crime.

- **Virtual Community Ward** - pioneered in Croydon, this re-designed service provides support in the community to people with the most complex medical and social needs by mimicking the workings of a hospital ward whilst treating people in their own homes.
London Borough of Croydon

Top tips for Service Delivery

- Strong, embedded partnership ethos
- Equal representation of public, private and voluntary sector on the partnership board
- Mature and trusting relationships within the partnership achieved through well defined structures, strong principles of equal partnership and easy access to each other
- Chief Executives’ Group has broad representation
- Strong business sector engagement
- Cross party political leadership
- Having a shared vision
- Executive decisions are taken by the Chief Executives the delivery of the Community Strategy and allocation of resources
- Community Strategy reviewed regularly
- Strong ambitions and focus on outcomes evident through the delivery of Community Strategy and the Local Area Agreement

- Partnership is a ‘Place shaper’ taking responsibility for whatever happens in the areas of Community Safety, Education, Health, Environment, Enterprise and local economy
- Role of Council as a lead agency within the ‘Place Shaping’ agenda is recognised, respected and supported
- Learning partnership – currently undertaking a fundamental review of the Partnership aimed at accountability, delivery and engagement
- Extensive engagement and involvement of local communities through Community Network and through Thematic partnerships and its sub groups
- Community Involvement Commitments shared by all partners
- Risk management integral to the partnership working
- Clear accountability between Theme Partnerships and the overall Partnership Board.
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Leeds is a city of contrasts comprising a built up urban city centre and rural hinterland with market towns. With a population of 750,000 it is the second largest authority in the country and has all the challenges of a big city not least of which are the 1 in 5 residents who live in poverty. Leeds Initiative, our Local Strategic Partnership, was founded in 1990 and is well-established, experienced and mature. The partnership is led by Leeds City Council, and was developed with the private and voluntary community and faith sectors. The Vision for Leeds 2004-2020 is our Sustainable Community Strategy and sets out three high level aims for the city to:

• Go up a league
• Narrow the gap between the most deprived parts of the city and the rest
• Develop our role as a regional capital

These joint aims are interlinked and have all been key to the success of the city e.g. the economic development and growth has allowed us to narrow the gap. The ‘golden thread’ flows from the Vision through the strategies, plans and work programmes of the partnership, and the partners. This includes the first Leeds Local Area Agreement 2006-9 through which we accelerated the improvement of the lives of local people through additional partnership actions and specific projects.

Key challenges for us include the co-ordination of our ambitious improvement agenda across such a large and diverse city and effectively involving over 500 partner organisations.

What has been achieved?

Our success can be demonstrated at all levels of the partnership from city wide down to the local level. The overall success of our narrowing the gap agenda can be demonstrated by the significant reduction in the number of super output areas within the 3% most deprived in the country from 31 in 2004 to 22 in 2007. This has been accompanied and made possible by a 36% increase in Gross Value Added (GVA) and the creation of 59,000 new jobs between 1996 and 2006. All this has been achieved through our partnership. This has been enabled and supported by a huge number of innovative, ambitious and sustainable solutions to the challenges we have faced across the city. Key examples of our success in Leeds include:

Children & Young People – through the Children Leeds partnership we have developed a number of really joined up and innovative solutions that wrap services around the child and family. This has included the development of joint appointments, integrated teams and strategic commissioning
Effective local working – we have worked hard across the city to promote partnership working at a very local level where the focus has been on getting the right people round the table to develop solutions to local problems and issues.

Involvement of the Business Community – Leeds Chamber was one of the founders of Leeds Initiative and the private sector has played a key role at every stage of the partnership’s development. The private sector has worked with other partners on key city initiatives through the Culture Partnership, Renaissance Leeds and most recently in Leeds’s successful bid for Local Enterprise Growth Initiative (LEGI) funding. Leeds Chamber is represented on the Leeds Initiative Executive and leads on a number of strategic groups for the city, including the Leeds Property Forum, Leeds Manufacturing and the Skills Board.

Health and Wellbeing – again by working closely with our partners we have been able to develop some innovative solutions which are making a real difference to peoples lives. For example the Leeds Incapacity Employment Project, an innovative project which aims to move people who are vulnerable because of mental illness or musculo-skeletal problems from the benefits system to employability or accredited training.

To achieve this outcome a partnership consisting of Leeds City Council, Leeds PCT, the Leeds NHS trusts, Jobcentre Plus and VCF sector have developed an innovative Leeds model that can offer individualised packages to incapacity benefit claimants suffering from mental health or musculoskeletal problems. Feedback from participants has been excellent and many have seen a real step change in their quality of life.

Reducing Crime - ‘Operation Champion’ – A multi-agency initiative to tackle the growing challenges of crime and anti social behaviour (ASB). The partnership recognised that areas suffering high levels of crime and ASB often manifest themselves in environmental ways and corrective actions provide crucial confidence and reassurance to the community.

The objectives of Operation Champion are to:
- Tackle priority crimes within targeted crime “hotspots” across the city
- Reduce incidents of anti social behaviour;
- Provide reassurance to local communities that their problems are recognised and are being addressed, and;
- Address key environmental issues that affect daily life of the community.

Following 17 Operation Champions, Leeds experienced a 5.2% reduction in offences in less than nine months by September 2007. Increased community confidence is reflected in the 17% increase in the reporting of incidents.
Culture – we recognise that through our strong and active cultural partnership we are directly supporting the Vision for Leeds aims. Leeds has a rich cultural offer with world class organisations and facilities to be found in the city including the Leeds Grand Theatre, Opera North, the new City Museum, Leeds Art Gallery, world class sports facilities and a wide range of cultural festivals and carnivals, all of which are represented through the partnership.

Community empowerment – the views of our communities were central to the development of the Vision for Leeds, and we have continued to work hard to empower and engage with all sectors. This is our selected area as one of the eleven LAA demonstration areas nationally.
Partnership is the way we do things in Leeds and partnership working is more than embedded it is second nature. In particular we feel that the critical factors that underpin our approach are:

- **Shared and simple vision**

  We have worked hard in Leeds to weave a golden thread through our partnership activity. Our shared vision is articulated in the “Vision for Leeds 2004 to 2020” the high level plan for the city. This was developed by all partners, based on an honest evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of the city and through a wide ranging consultation with stakeholders and communities (independently validated as reaching 74% of the population).

  The Leeds Strategic Plan 2008 to 2011 (which incorporates our new LAA) sets out the actions the council will take itself, or with its partners, to make progress towards the Vision aims. The Leeds Strategic Plan is effectively a single delivery plan for the city and again this has been developed through an inclusive partnership process to ensure ownership and buy-in across the city.

- **Open and challenging environment**

  The mature relationships within the partnership mean we have created an environment where all partners can put forward their opinions and we encourage open dialogue and challenge.

- **Effective problem solving**

  We recognise that the truly joined up partnership working requires a shared understanding and analysis of need which paves the way for the development of shared solutions.

- **Dynamic and responsive governance arrangements**

  We have a family of partnerships including strategy and development partnerships, delivery partnerships and local partnerships:

  - Strategy and development partnerships lead on the development of policy and strategies in their areas, and are inclusive in their membership and seek to work together to join up their agendas.
  - Delivery partnerships focus on the partnership commissioning of services including LAA related activity, such as the LAA strategy group. They are therefore more tightly defined, with, for example, legal agreements to ensure that accountability is achieved.
Local partnerships’ activity is co-ordinated through the Council’s 10 area committees, in addition to their formal role within the council. Officer Co-ordination groups bring together senior partners (Police, Primary Care Trust and ALMOs) who lead the services across the council’s three area management areas.

These factors provide us with solid foundations but also allow us to be dynamic and responsive in order to overcome challenges and to meet future requirements.

For more information please visit the Leeds Initiative website http://www.leedsinitiative.org/ or email LAALSPbeacon@leeds.gov.uk

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### LSP and LAA Beacons Expertise Matrix

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**Key:** ✓ = Strong  ✓ ✓ = Very Strong
Find out more

For further information on the Beacon Scheme and to find out how you can get involved:

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