

AGENDA ITEM: 8

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

12th December 2006

AD HOC - SCRUTINY PANEL LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1 To inform Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Board of the actions taken by the Ad Hoc Scrutiny Panel established to consider the Local Area Agreement.

RECOMMENDATION

- 2 It is recommended that the Overview and Scrutiny Board receives the report of the Ad Hoc Panel regarding their consideration of the Draft Local Area Agreement.

BACKGROUND

- 3 The Ad Hoc Scrutiny Panel held a meeting on the 28th November 2006. At this meeting the Panel received an update from the Executive Director of Social Care and the Principle Corporate Development Officer regarding the current position and process adopted by Middlesbrough for developing the LAA.
- 4 The Panel was informed that Local Area Agreements are part of the Governments 10 year vision to strengthen the leadership role of Local authorities and increase partnership working and involve local people. LAAs will be rolled out to all areas by 2007, each being a 3 year agreement which is refreshed annually between key partners and Central Government.

Middlesbrough anticipates it will have an agreed LAA with Government by March 2007.

Key points of the Local Area Agreement are:-

- 5 The LAA does not bring additional resources or 'new' money. It does however enable existing resources to be used more effectively in responding to local need.

Nationally LAAs are designed around four key blocks:

Children and Young People
Healthier Communities and Older People
Safer and Stronger Communities
Economic Development and Enterprise.

- 6 Local negotiations should be taken forward by local authorities and local strategic partnerships and should include effective community engagement.
- 7 Authorities and their partners will negotiate clear targets and outcomes for these areas with central government, but then will have the freedom to decide locally how best to achieve them.
- 8 The potential for rationalisation of monitoring arrangements should bring efficiencies.

MIDDLESBROUGH'S DRAFT LAA

- 9 Middlesbrough's LAA builds on the outcomes and priorities identified within the Community Strategy 2005. It provides an opportunity to build on the achievements of the Partnership and make progress against the Community Strategy Themes and Strategic priorities. Middlesbrough submitted its draft LAA to Government Office North East (GONE) at the end of September. The document is structured around the six community strategy themes:

- Supporting Children and Learning
- Promoting Healthier Communities for all and effective social care for adults
- Creating Safer and Stronger Communities
- Transforming our local environment
- Meeting Local Transport Needs More Effectively
- Promoting the Economic Vitality of Middlesbrough

PANEL FINDINGS

- 10 The Panel considered that the Draft LAA was comprehensive and that the initial remarks from Government Office on the Draft were very encouraging. The Panel recognises that there are benefits of bringing a range of plans together into one document, which assists in driving accountability of partners to deliver their commitments.
- 11 The Panel believes this has the potential of being a key role for the Local Authority and that it is important that the Local Authority ensures its leadership role in the LAA is clearly defined.

COUNCILLOR MIKE CARR

CHAIR OF OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY BOARD

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 12 No background paper was used in the preparation of this report: -

29th November 2006

Contact: Peter Clark
Senior Scrutiny Officer, Performance and Policy Directorate
Telephone: 01642 729 708 (direct line)