



November 2007 Bulletin

Sustainable Community Strategy & Local Area Agreement 2

Contents

- [Sustainable Community Strategy Latest](#)
 - [New National Indicator Set](#)
 - [Finance and LAA2](#)
 - Area Based Grant.
 - Reward Grant.
 - [Developing an LAA2 target](#)
 - [Key Dates](#)
-

Sustainable Community Strategy Latest

The draft Oxfordshire Sustainable Community Strategy is out for comment with key partnerships/local authorities/organisations until the **30th November**.

The Oxfordshire Partnership has agreed the broad themes as:

- A World Class Economy
- Environment and Climate Change
- Healthy and Thriving Communities

Breaking the Cycle of Deprivation and Climate Change have also been identified as cross-cutting themes. For each theme a number of priorities have been identified. These priorities are supported by a number of 'pledges', promises that Oxfordshire Partnership will make to the public to improve outcomes. Detailed actions to support these pledges will be developed by key thematic partnerships, such as the Oxfordshire Waste Partnership, and Children and Young People's Partnership etc.

The Partnership requests further feedback on:

- the pledges (promises the partnership will make to the community)
- actions and targets to meet those pledges
- indicators to measure progress
- which partnerships could be involved in implementing actions.

Please see our website for the draft strategy www.oxfordshirepartnership.org.uk

If you would like further information then please contact Claire Evans (details below).

New National Indicator Set

On Oct 19th the new National Indicator Set (NIS)was published by the Dept for Communities and Local Government. The new NIS consists of 198 indicators that will be measured across the Oxfordshire Partnership. The new indicators set represents a significant reduction from over 1200 different measurements, including BVPIs, that central government previously used to assess the performance of local government and its partners.

Only sixteen of the seventeen indicators that will be statutory indicators related to children & young people have so far been identified.

Although the detail of how exactly performance against these indicators will be measured will not be finalised until Jan 2008, a consultation document will be published in November that will provide an indication of what they will be.

Finance and LAA2

The full details of the financial arrangements that will underpin LAA2, are yet to be announced but some basic information is known:

Increased pooling of resources, through the new Area Based Grant (see below) provides greater flexibility to support local priorities.

Year one of the new funding arrangements is being talked about as a transitional year, to give partnerships time to develop new mechanisms to manage funding.

The role of the Oxfordshire Partnership (i.e. the framework of OP Board, PSB, Thematic partnerships) in relation to the new funding arrangements will need consideration; with stronger governance and elected member involvement being key issues.

Area Based Grant (ABG) – a larger pooled resource.

As of April 2008, a new Area Based Grant (ABG), will be paid to the County Council as the lead accountable body within the Oxfordshire Partnership. The ABG will not be ring-fenced i.e. there will be no terms and conditions on how it is spent. The Area Based Grant is being described as the replacement for the LAA pooled funding. The creation of an ABG is part of an initiative to reduce separate grant funding and to provide more flexibility for areas to decide how money can be focussed on local priorities.

There is no guarantee that the levels of funding previously provided through the separate grants will be maintained when they are channelled into the ABG. A list of the minimum set of revenue grants being amalgamated into the ABG for 2008/09 has been published (http://www.local.odpm.gov.uk/finance/rsg_abg.pdf). A comprehensive list will be published at the time of the provisional local government finance settlement – expected at the end of November 2007. Details of capital grants will also be announced alongside the provisional local government settlement; it is not yet clear whether these will become part of the ABG.

In future years, Dept. for Communities and Local Government aim to include Supporting People programme grant from 2009/10, (dependent on pilots in 2008/09 not raising serious concerns), and Dept. Children, Schools and Families aim to include Contact Point (formerly Sharing IS Index) from 2010/11.

LAA2 and Reward Grant

It has been announced that there will be reward money associated with successful performance against LAA2 targets. The mechanism for delivering this reward money has yet to be announced. It is expected that details of this will be published in the second phase of LAA2 guidance due out later this month.

Developing an LAA2 Target

Up to early December 2007, Thematic Partnerships and partner organisations will be able to submit plans for potential LAA2 targets. The plans will need to include:

- a description of the desired outcome and the nature of the work that will be carried out to achieve it; including how the work relates to the priorities included in the draft Sustainable Community Strategy,
- information on which organisation /partnership would take the lead in delivering the target,
- details of the resources required to carry out the work – both current resources that will be allocated to the target and/or any additional resource requirements,
- details of any risks to the delivery of the plans
- suggestions for which indicator(s) from the National Indicator Set could be used to measure the success of the work,
- information on any baseline information that exists, plus an indication of the likely level of improvement that could be achieved if the plans were adopted,
- details of how the success of the work would be measured throughout the term of the new Local Area Agreement.

All plans that are submitted with the above information will be included on the long-list of potential targets to be reviewed by Oxfordshire Leaders and the Public Service Board in late December / early January. Work will then continue on all plans which have been agreed for further consideration. As the technical details of how indicators will be measured should be available in January 2008, it will be possible at this stage to agree the specific indicators and to establish appropriate levels of improvements for each target.

Throughout the period of developing the targets those leading the work will be expected to actively involve, consult and gain the support of elected members.

It is also expected that the Government Office for the South East (GOSE) will be involved throughout the process; the Partnership Team will be able to link organisations and Partnerships with the relevant GOSE specialist. Final negotiations with GOSE will take place in mid Feb 2008.

Further information and pro-formas to support the development of targets will be available on the Oxfordshire Partnership website during the week beginning Nov 5th.

If you have any specific queries please contact Jayne Dunn LAA2 Project Manager – details below

Key Dates

2007

- Oct 29th – Nov 30th: Draft Sustainable Community Strategy available for consultation & comment with key partnerships/local authorities/organisations
- Dec 10th: Deadline for submitting potential targets to be included on long list for LAA2
- Dec 11th: Draft Sustainable Community Strategy to Oxfordshire Partnership for agreement.
- Dec 20th: Oxfordshire Leaders review long list of potential LAA2 targets.

2008

- Jan 7th: Public Service Board reviews long list of potential LAA2 targets.
- Jan – Feb: 8 weeks public consultation on revised draft Sustainable Community Strategy
- Mid Feb: Detailed work to create final draft of LAA2; including discussions with Government Office for the South East.
- Mar 4th: Public Service Board - Final drafts of SCS & LAA2 to meeting for agreement.
- Mar 7th: Oxfordshire Partnership - Final drafts of SCS & LAA2 to meeting for agreement.
- Mar 18th: County Council cabinet - Final draft of SCS & LAA2 for agreement.
- End Mar: Agreed final draft of LAA2 submitted to central government.

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For further information on the Oxfordshire Partnership visit
www.oxfordshirepartnership.org.uk

Updates as of November 13th 2007.

This is a summary of events that have happened, or are due to happen, between the publishing of the November Bulletin on November 1st and the Public Service Board meeting on November 21st 2007.

- Thursday November 8th, saw the publishing of the **technical guidance** for the new National Indicator Set, all 400 pages of it. It has been published for consultation with the final guidance due in January 2008.
- November 14th – 1st meeting of the LAA2 Development Team
- November 16th the draft of the paper on Oxfordshire produced by Di Morrish and her team at GOSE ready for the GOSE internal round table discussion on November 26th.
- November 20th –at the time of writing this is the expected date for publication of Phase 2 of the guidance on the new Local Area Agreement.