
Executive

3rd June 2008

Report of the Director of City Strategy

‘York – A city making history’ – York’s Sustainable Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement

Purpose

1. This report presents Members with the Without Walls Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2025, entitled ‘York – A city making history’. The Strategy represents the deliberations of Without Walls Partners and the aspirations of local people in updating the Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement for 2008. Members are asked to endorse the strategy as a whole and approve the Council’s contributions contained within the strategy and Local Area Agreement.

Background

2. Current government guidance regarding production of Community Strategies was produced in December 2000. This was in response to the introduction of Part 1 of the Local Government Act, which placed a duty on principal local authorities to prepare community strategies to enhance the economic, social and environmental well being of their areas.
3. Without Walls was established in 2002 and spent the first two years of its existence developing the twenty year vision and Community Strategy, York: a city making history. The strategy was developed following assistance of the consultants, URBED, who produced a discussion paper, entitled ‘A new Vision for York’, which opened the debate about York’s future. Launch of the URBED report was the catalyst for an extensive series of partnership meetings, together with community consultation events, termed the ‘Festival of ideas’. The resultant strategy and the actions within it were structured under the seven themes of culture, health, inclusion, learning, safety, sustainability and economy.
4. Following release of the Egan Review, Skills for Sustainable Communities, in April 2004, it was expected that Community Strategies would be further developed into a ‘Sustainable Community Strategy’ (SCS). The SCS must be much more specific to the location and moves away from the ‘Any Town’ style of Community Strategy that had developed in many areas.
5. The requirement for all localities to have a ‘Sustainable’ Community Strategy was enshrined in legislation when the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Bill received royal assent in October 2007. The Bill also introduced a statutory duty for all top tier local authorities to produce a Local Area Agreement

(LAA) and to move the existing LAA (period 2007/08 – to 2009/10) to a ‘new’ LAA (period 2008/09 – to 2010/11).

6. It was specified that the revised LAA would include up to 35 indicators from a new national indicator set of 198 and 17 statutory indicators on educational attainment (which are included in the new national set). In addition, the ‘new’ LAA could also include local indicators (selected from the new national set or otherwise) to reflect local priorities.
7. There is now no other way of setting targets with central government and there is a statutory duty for specified partners to cooperate in the delivery of the LAA.

Sustainable Community Strategy

8. In line with the process previously agreed by the Without Walls Partnership and aligned to our business model, the SCS brings together information from a number of sources, including wide-ranging consultation contributions and the comments of delivery partnerships. Of particular significance are:
 - The decision to carry forward the vision and seven themes from the first Community Strategy;
 - The introduction of strategic ambitions;
 - The results of the Festival of Ideas 2 consultation run jointly with the Local Development Framework;
 - The ‘Story of Place’ evidence base;
 - The identification of major issues and cross-cutting challenges that York needs to address;
 - Explicit links with the emerging Issues and Options from the Local Development Framework;
 - The citywide Anti Poverty Strategy;
 - The emerging citywide Climate Change Strategy;
 - The work of the Future York Group;
 - The indicators within the Local Area Agreement 2008
9. The Sustainable Community Strategy (Attached at Annex A) has been written as a document that can be used by partners to inform their own strategies and plans. Ideally it will become the ‘Masterplan for York’ that makes it clear for all residents, partners, stakeholders and investors what the intended future direction of York is. In many respects the SCS is a signpost document. It points out the future direction of the city and indicates both where more information can be found and how future decisions and action will be taken.
10. A more populist and accessible version of the document will be prepared for the public launch of the Sustainable Community Strategy, which is planned for the Partnership’s annual Community Conference.
11. The SCS is structured as follows:

- **Foreword;**
- **What is a Sustainable Community Strategy:** Explaining what an SCS is / Identifying what has changed since the last Community Strategy;
- **About York:** Telling York's 'Story of Place' / Setting out the results of public consultation / Making reference to the Future York Group;
- **Vision and Strategic Ambitions:** Reaffirming the vision / Asserting strategic ambitions for York / Identifying major issues and cross-cutting challenges
- **Local Development Framework:** Referring to the essential connection between the SCS and LDF
- **Delivering the Vision:** Detailing the specific actions that need to be taken within each of the seven delivery themes (i.e. The Sustainable City, The Thriving City, The Learning City, A City of Culture, The Safer City, The Healthy City, The Inclusive City)
- **Making it Happen:** Governance arrangements / Planning and Performance Management arrangements / LAA Funding

Local Area Agreement

12. The indicators that have been selected for the Local Area Agreement are included in the most appropriate thematic section within the SCS and identified as an LAA indicator. Full details of the indicators, including baselines and targets where available, are shown at Annex B and Annex C for statutory attainment indicators.
13. Without Walls have also agreed to monitor a number of high level trend measures that are not in the LAA and these have been included in the SCS. For example, total crime per 100,000 population and to reduce York's ecological footprint. These measures have been incorporated in the most appropriate thematic section.
14. Members of the SCS / LAA Steering Group have incorporated final target trajectories for most indicators through to 2011 in negotiation with Government Office contacts. However, it has not been possible to set targets for some indicators for a variety of reasons, including:
 - Data is not available to inform target setting until later in the year (e.g. the target is reliant on the Place Survey which is not scheduled to take place until September 2008);
 - We are awaiting further guidance or instructions from central government departments regarding the indicator definition (e.g. Home Office guidance on re-offending rate of prolific and priority offenders);
 - The target is reliant on other systems / organisations that are not able to make information available at present (e.g. Ofsted are not due to release baseline data from the 2008 survey on young people's participation in positive activities until November 2009).
15. The position on target setting for the LAA is as follows:

Type of Indicator	Targets Set	Target to be set by 30/6/08	Target will not be set by 30/06/08	Total
Statutory	16	0	1	17
Designated	23	6	6	35
Local	6	3	4	13
Total	45	9	11	65

16. This position, whilst not ideal, is consistent with the principle adopted in developing the LAA, i.e. that the 'technical process' of setting targets would not devalue the LAA negotiation progress. Consequently, if an outcome was identified as strategically important, then the issue took precedence over concerns about the robustness or reliability of the indicator.
17. GOYH has indicated that for the first year of the LAA they are happy to accept target gaps. This approach is also now officially emerging from central government; for example, the following statements are made in recent guidance regarding Performance Reward Grant:
- A significant proportion of NPIs are new with little performance history to guide target setting, therefore, LAAs must be flexible to the new circumstances and changes may need to be made at the annual refresh, especially in the first 'transitional year';
 - Due to 2008/09 being a transitional year for the LAA it is proposed to base LAA Reward Grant on performance in years 2&3 of the LAA to enable baselines and trajectories to be 'locked down' in year 1;
 - This will allow areas more scope to include ambitious targets and spend year 1 planning in detail the interventions needed to deliver them and set the right level of target with more precision.
18. Without Walls have approved the SCS and LAA on 29 April. They also recommended that it should be formally endorsed and adopted by the major public bodies that affect York and the eight strategic thematic partnerships. Following endorsement by Full Council on 30 June, Without Walls plan to communicate the strategy and targets in different ways to reach the maximum number of people in the most effective way.

Corporate Objectives

19. The SCS and LAA contribute to the seven Corporate Strategy Direction Statements, our ten priorities and the short term imperative to respond to York's changing population. The spatial consequences of the SCS will be delivered by the Local Development Framework.

Implications

20. **Financial** - LAA Operational Guidance states that 'in agreeing targets for inclusion in LAAs, partnerships will want to consider how they will resource delivery of these priorities. Individual partners may wish to pool their mainstream resources, where this is possible'. It also acknowledges that the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act, 2007 emphasises the need for cooperation, including

the possibility of shared commissioning across the different public service providers to better meet the expectation of citizens.

21. The Executive has also approved use of the residual LPSA2 reward grant to support achievement of Local Area Agreement targets. The LPSA2 grant of approximately £850,000 will be used to implement and manage schemes that have the greatest impact on achieving targets.
22. **Equalities** – There are specific implications for LAAs in relation to two aspects of the Race Relations Act 1976. The majority of bodies involved in LAAs are public bodies, and as such, have obligations under this Act. Specifically, whilst undertaking their role as stakeholders in LAAs, they must be mindful of the General Duty under the Act, which is: (a) to eliminate racial discrimination, (b) to promote equal opportunities and (c) to promote good relations between different racial groups. Partners have capitalised on the SCS / LAA refresh process to help achieve their General Duty obligations.
23. The Race Relation Amendment Act, Disability Equality Duty, Gender Equality Duty and Equality Standard for Local Government also requires us to monitor the impact of our improvement activities in relation to all six equalities strands, where relevant. In the context of the LAA, Partners will need to consider how delivery of LAA outcomes is impacting on different minority groups.
24. **Legal** – The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Bill placed a statutory requirement on the local authority to develop a Sustainable Community Strategy and LAA and duties on named partners to co-operate with the authority.
25. **Crime and Disorder, Human Resources, Information Technology** – There are no implications in these areas.

Risk Management

26. Failure to agree the LAA would result in the Council missing national LAA Ministerial sign-off on 30 June 2008, which could damage the image and reputation of the council.

Recommendations

27. The Executive is asked to:
 - a) Note the content of 'York – A city making history' and the Local Area Agreement 2008, and in particular to:
 - Endorse York's Sustainable Community Strategy as appended to this report; and,
 - Endorse the appended Local Area Agreement for submission to and agreement with the Government.
 - b) Authorise the Chief Executive to sign the relevant documentation to effect the above and to refer it to Government Office accordingly.

28. Reason: To ensure that the Council meets its statutory duty to produce a Sustainable Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement.

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Report Approved **Date** 23 May 2008

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Report Approved **Date** 23 May 2008

Wards Affected:

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Annexes

A – York’s Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2025

B - Local Area Agreement Targets 2008 - 2011

C – Local Area Agreement Statutory Educational Attainment Indicators

Background Papers:

- Creating Strong, Safe and Prosperous Communities – Statutory Guidance: Draft for Consultation – CLG – Nov 2007
- Negotiating New Local Area Agreements – CLG – Sep 2007
- Strong and Prosperous Communities – The Local Government White Paper – CLG – Oct 2006