

Meeting:	Cabinet
Date:	17 th July 2008
Subject:	Local Area Agreement 2008-2011
Key Decision:	Yes
Responsible Officer:	Tom Whiting, Assistant Chief Executive
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Paul Osborn, Portfolio Holder for Performance, Communication and Corporate Services
Exempt:	No
Enclosures:	Local Area Agreement

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report sets out the new Local Area Agreement for Harrow and the process that was undertaken.

Recommendation:

Cabinet is requested to:

Adopt the new local area agreement initiatives for the purpose of developing the Council's future Directorate service plans.

Reason: Adopting the Local Area Agreement will ensure that Directorate service plans include actions to deliver the agreed stretch targets

Section 2 – Report

1. Background

Local Area Agreements were first introduced as a pilot in 2005 and were rolled out across the following two years to all upper tier local authorities. The purpose of the LAA was to be used as a performance tool to help local areas agree common priorities between partners and use both pooled and aligned funding to achieve these.

Harrow successfully negotiated its first LAA in April 2006 and is currently in its second year of the three-year agreement. The agreement is built round four activity blocks:- Children and Young People; Healthier Communities and Older People, Safer and Stronger Communities and Sustainable Development and Enterprise.

The Local Government White Paper Strong and Prosperous Communities, published December 2006, proposed changes to Local Area Agreements to make them more flexible and to fit with the new performance regime for local government. These changes are being taken forward in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Bill, which is expected to complete its parliamentary passage in October.

As a result of the White Paper proposals, the Harrow Strategic Partnership was required to refresh Harrow's agreement to reflect current improvement priorities for the area and align with the new national indicator set and performance regime.

2. New Local Area Agreement

The new Local Area Agreement consists of up to 35 improvement indicators, chosen from the 198 National indicator set and negotiated by the partnership, plus 17 mandatory children services indicators. The agreement also includes a number of additional local targets that were not required to be negotiated with or monitored by government. These additional local targets mainly comprise the old LAA stretched indicators which will be completed by April 2009.

A summit was held on the 15th November for all partners of the local strategic partnership to identify and endorse improvement priorities and confirm the rationale for these choices. The summit also provided the first opportunity to start aligning Harrow's priorities with the 198 national indicators.

A long process of exploring the scope for stretching performance, the controllability of the performance against the corresponding indicators and the estimated costs of obtaining improved performance whittled down the long list of priorities identified by the Summit to 35 potential indicators.

The HSP Board considered the LAA as it was at the time of their last meeting in 13th May and approved the agreements that had at that time been reached. The Board delegated authority to agree changes to the 35 indicators or significant changes to the proposed targets to representatives of the bodies

concerned with delivery. The attached table summarises the final position which was that negotiations with Government produced agreement on targets for 34 improvement indicators and these are proposed to form the new LAA.

3. Performance Issues

The LAA represents the choice of up to 35 of the 198 national indicators against which the partnership feels that it is important for the borough to improve performance for the benefit of residents. The Council and its partners will record performance against all 198 indicators although targets need not be set for those not included in the LAA.

For the indicators included in the LAA, the Partnership Management Groups have or will be producing delivery plans to show the actions proposed to meet the stretched targets. These will be monitored quarterly with performance reports to Management Groups the Partnership, CSB Performance mornings and Improvement Boards.

It is likely that performance against the LAA targets will be used to inform judgements made under the new Comprehensive Area Assessment. (CAA) Details of the way in which the CAA will work have not yet been released but the high level descriptions suggest that the quality of our partnerships, the extent of joint working, and the ability of partnerships to lead their communities and address their needs will be significant. The proposed LAA provides the framework against which evidence of the success partnership work can be demonstrated.

If all of the LAA stretch targets are met, a reward grant which is estimated to be in the region of £2.2m will be paid in 2012/2013.

Section 4 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Name: Sheela Thakrar	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the* Chief Financial Officer
Date: 28 th May 2008		
Name: Helen White	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the* Monitoring Officer
Date: 28 th May 2008		

Section 4 – Performance Officer Clearance

Name: Tom Whiting	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Divisional Director (Strategy and Improvement)
Date: 28 th May 2008.		

Section 5 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Trina Taylor, Senior Policy Officer, Policy and Partnerships 020 8420 9324

Background Papers: Local Area Agreement 2008-2011