

Local Area Agreement Review and Refresh

Purpose

To update the Herefordshire Partnership Management Group on the LAA Review and Refresh process and to gain approval for submission of the documentation to Joint Management Team, Cabinet and Government Office.

Herefordshire Community Strategy

The LAA is the primary delivery mechanism for ensuring the priorities in the Herefordshire Community Strategy are addressed in a way which will make a sustainable difference to those living and working in Herefordshire.

Considerations

1. As set out in Strong and Prosperous Communities (2006) and the subsequent LAA Operational Guidance, it is the intention of Central Government that each LAA will be subject to an annual Review and Refresh process.
2. The purpose of the Review is to identify and address any issues around delivery, including risks and good practice and to help assess and benchmark progress towards the targets.
3. The Refresh is an opportunity to revise, by exception, particular targets to reflect changes in local circumstances or national priorities. After the last Refresh process, all targets were locked down, with the exception of indicators which it was deemed would be disproportionately affected by the current downturn.
4. In Herefordshire these unlocked indicators are NI 152 (Out of Work Benefits), NI 155 (Affordable Housing) and NI 171 (Business Registration Rate). The 2010 Refresh gives an opportunity to review the previously agreed targets against the current economic situation and to put forward a businesses case to revise them if appropriate.
5. The only other changes which affect Herefordshire are amendments to baseline data for 4 indicators measured by the Place Survey. In these cases published data was different to pre-published data and the confidence intervals have been amended by the Audit Commission. These indicators are NI 1 (People from different backgrounds getting on well together), NI 4 (Influencing Decisions), NI 6 (Volunteering) and NI 21 (Dealing with local concerns about ASB and Crime). In the case of these indicators localities have the opportunity to put forward revisions to ensure the agreed target remains statistically significant.
6. Lead Officers, Policy and Delivery Groups, Policy and Performance and Performance Improvement Managers have been fully involved in the process of developing and agreeing the Review Report, draft 3 of which is attached as Appendix 1 (an update will be tabled at the meeting). The changes being proposed

for the Refresh are outlined in Appendix 2. The only significant re-negotiation is around NI 152 (Benefit Claimants) where it is proposed that the target is to maintain the baseline figure of 8.9%, which, given the large increase in claimants since that baseline was set, is still seen to be extremely challenging.

7. The timescale for submission of the LAA Review and Refresh is shown below

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|-------------------------|---|
| December – January 2010 | LAA Annual Review discussions between Government Office (GO), Local Strategic Partnerships. CAA evidence base and any local performance data to be used to inform these discussions |
| 1 Feb 2010 | GOs submit regional LAA Annual Review summary reports to CLG highlighting any proposed changes to LAAs. |
| Feb – March 2010 | Refresh discussions. GOs to advise CLG of any unexpected changes |
| Feb – March 2010 | CLG coordinated cross-Government view on any LAA changes and reports back to GOs |
| by 12 March 2010 | Local Authority adoption of LAAs (Cabinet etc) |
| by 17 March 2010 | Refresh process concludes with submission of final LAAs to CLG. |
| by 31 March 2010 | Ministerial Approval. |

Recommendations

The Herefordshire Partnership Management Group is recommended to:

1. Note the process, scope and timescale of the Review and Refresh process
2. Comment on the Review and Refresh documentation and make suggestions for amendments/additions where appropriate.
3. Agree that the Review and Refresh be presented to Joint Management Team, Cabinet and Government Office for approval.

Risk Management

If the Review process is not carried out effectively and does not meet Government Office expectations or timelines there will be a reputational risk for Herefordshire which may affect future relationships with regional or central government.

If the opportunity to refresh the indicators is not recognised, and evidence to support this process is not robust, there is a risk that targets will not be achieved and Reward Grant not maximised.

Consultees

Policy and Performance Team
 Research Team
 Performance Improvement Network

Policy and Delivery Groups
 Lead Officers across partner organisations

Appendices

No appendices