



To: Environment Scrutiny Committee
Report by: Executive Councillor for Climate Change and Growth – Cllr. Claire Blare
Relevant scrutiny committee: Environment Scrutiny Committee 5th October 2010
Wards affected: All Wards

Draft: LAA Performance Report 2009/10 - ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

Not a Key Decision

1. Executive summary

- 1.1 The City Council is a key partner in Cambridgeshire Together. This partnership had overall responsibility for negotiating the Local Area Agreement (LAA) for Cambridgeshire and is overseeing its delivery.
- 1.2 Cambridgeshire Together has delegated responsibility for delivery of targets within the LAA to 6 thematic strategic partnerships. The Leader sits on Cambridgeshire Together and an Executive Councillor from the City Council sits on each of the thematic strategic partnerships.
- 1.3 It was agreed that they should present an annual report on performance against their partnership's LAA targets to the relevant City Council Scrutiny Committee. This paper relates to the LAA targets delegated to the Environmental Sustainability Partnership. The Executive Councillor for Climate Change and Growth represents the City Council on this partnership.

2. Recommendations

The Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

- 2.1 Consider the 2009/10 year-end performance against the LAA indicators that have been assigned to the Environmental Sustainability Partnership.
- 2.2 Advise the Executive Councillor of any performance issues that she should report back to the Environmental Sustainability Partnership.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Local Area Agreement (LAA) for Cambridgeshire is an agreement between the government and Cambridgeshire County Council and its partners for improving selected services and getting better outcomes for local people. It contains a number of targets (55) against which the government will appraise performance, with the possibility of Reward Grant being distributed based on their achievement at the end of a 3 year period (2008/09 to 2010/11). This grant could, however, be reduced or withdrawn as a part of the government's public spending review.
- 3.2 Cambridgeshire Together is the body responsible for overseeing the LAA and acts as the Local Strategic Partnership for Cambridgeshire. It has assigned responsibility for developing and delivering actions to bring about the improvements in the LAA, to 6 thematic strategic partnerships involving elected members, who work with specialist officers with responsibility for services contributing to the targets in their area. Some of the partnerships existed before the LAA and also have a wider remit. Partnership arrangements are presently being reviewed and it is likely that there will be fewer county-wide partnership bodies in the future that officers and members are involved in.
- 3.3 A number of City Council staff are presently involved in partnership work. This involvement is primarily limited to attendance at partnership meetings and the delivery of city focussed projects. Partnership working, when effective, can have major benefits for the City Council. For example, it can help us to deliver our own objectives such as sustainable growth and reducing CO₂ emissions by influencing the priorities of partners and the way in which they deliver their services. A number of the partnerships are themselves of long standing and which pre-date the LAA system such as RECAP.
- 3.4 Cambridge Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) set out a vision for the City in its Sustainable Community Strategy. This helped inform the Vision for Cambridgeshire, which in turn set the priorities that formed the focus of the LAA. Therefore, if the LAA is successfully delivered, the City's Sustainable Community Strategy will, to a large extent, also be delivered.
- 3.5 Cambridge LSP has now merged with South Cambridgeshire LSP to form a single LSP covering both districts. It continues to monitor the performance of the LAA locally and is looking to ensure that local partnerships and lead partners are contributing effectively to its

achievement. One key task for the new LSP over the next year will be to prepare a shared Sustainable Community Strategy. This will involve consulting partnerships and other stakeholders about local priorities.

- 3.6 Cambridge City Council has nominated Executive members to each of the 6 thematic strategic partnerships, to the Cambridgeshire Together Board and Cambridge Local Strategic Partnership. As well as helping to facilitate better partnership working and bringing about service improvements across partner agencies, the Council agreed that Executive members would give an account of the partnerships work to their scrutiny committees, so that scrutiny committee members can assess progress.
- 3.7 This report focuses on the performance of indicators, overseen by this partnership, that have been assigned LAA targets.
- 3.8 As members will appreciate, there is currently lots of uncertainty about future funding from government. We do not know what will happen after the LAA ends in April 2011. Government have already scrapped the requirement for the public sector to collect and report on a number of indicators within the National Indicator Set. They have cancelled the Statutory Place Survey and Status Survey (a survey of Council Tenants) which were due to take place this autumn and would have collected information for some of the indicators within the National Indicator Set and our LAA.
- 3.9 Government has also invited Local Authorities and Business leaders to submit proposals for new Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs). The deadline for proposals was 6th September. Again, there is uncertainty about exactly how such partnerships might operate or how funding might be directed.
- 3.10 One of the incentives for partners to prioritise resources to deliver the LAA was that we would receive 'reward grant' from government for successfully achieving our targets. It now seems very unlikely that any new reward grant will be made available even if we achieve all our targets.
- 3.11 Given that the existing structure of Cambridge Together and the thematic strategic partnerships was set up primarily to deliver the LAA and the wider National Indicator Set and given that the government are seeking to establish Local Enterprise Partnerships, there is need for a radical re-think about how partners should work together in future.

- 3.12 The Public Service Board (Cambridgeshire Local Authority, Police, Health and Fire Chief Executives) has commissioned a small group of officers to draw up proposals to show how the formal partnership structures could be refocused on local priorities, rationalised, less bureaucratic and much more flexible.
- 3.13 Reports giving more detail on both the LEP proposals and the current position with the LAA will be going to Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Committee on 11th October.
- 3.14 Alongside the county-wide review, officers within Strategy and Partnerships are also co-ordinating work to review the staff resources going into our partnership work so that we can ensure we focus our resources on the areas that will deliver our own objectives.

4. Introduction to Environmental Sustainability Partnership

- 4.1 The Environmental Sustainability Partnership held its first meeting in January 2010 and at this time agreed terms of reference to guide its work. The overarching purpose of the partnership is to ensure that different local agencies work together effectively to promote environmental sustainability in Cambridgeshire, meeting the challenges of climate change while maintaining a high quality environment in Cambridgeshire. The partnership is presently developing it's a vision and action plan.
- 4.2 Five delivery partnerships report to the Environmental Sustainability Partnership. These, and some of their present work, are shown below:

Recycling in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Waste Partnership (RECAP)

- This partnership has overseen a decrease in the amount of residual waste per household during 2009/10 across the partnership. Dry-recycling is up half a percent, however composting performance is down, around 0.7%, as a result of a poor growing season. The percentage of municipal waste and household waste going to landfill has been maintained at 46.5%. Reduced household composting tonnages will affect performance for the broader NI193 (municipal) target. In reality, less waste has been buried in the ground than in 2008/09 - an environmental success.

Cambridgeshire Climate Change Partnership

- The partnership is on track to achieve Level 1 on a prescribed scale of preparedness for climate change risks and opportunities for districts. Achievement of the 2010/11 target (Level 2) remains a challenge for some districts. Priority themes for delivery have been established and will be the focus until the end of the LAA. As climate change is so cross-cutting there is considerable existing activity under the priority theme: sustainable procurement, business engagement and the public estate. Work is now ongoing to secure support for a climate-proofing project.

Travel for Work Partnership

- Providing Travel Plan Essentials Workshops aimed at employers in the Partnership's network who are new to travel planning. 'Mentor' employers who are experienced travel planners are assisting with this.
- The EU funded Travel Plan Plus (TP+) project based in the Science Park area of Cambridge, is establishing a large travel plan network. In March a series of five employer-based events promoted sustainable travel, and car sharing in particular, directly to commuters in these companies. More recently 25 cyclists attended the first TP+ Bicycle User Group.

Biodiversity Partnership

- Over the past 4 years the Partnership's small projects fund has contributed approximately £50,000 to 32 projects, with the total value of these projects being over £500,000. This demonstrates the ability of the Partnership to bring added value to the local area and to secure external funding. (These figures exclude the additional external resources that partners have secured for landscape scale projects).
- The provisional 2009/2010 figures for NI 197 - Positive management of local wildlife sites (County Wildlife Sites) – show a total of 195 sites out of 414 (47%) are in positive management against a target of 45% of sites (185 sites out of 412).

Cambridgeshire Flood Risk Management Partnership

- Cambridgeshire County Council is playing an active advisory and consultative role in several Defra policy development projects. It has recently provided a case study to the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA) that will form part of a resource for other local authorities on flood risk management, and has been asked by the Environment Agency to coordinate a flood risk management group to bring together lead local flood authorities in the region (for which the Regional Efficiency and Improvement Partnership (REIP) has been approached for funding).
- The Lamb Drove Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) monitoring project has gained a national profile and Defra recently visited the site with members of the public to learn more about the benefits of SUDs. The interim results from a two year monitoring project of the effectiveness of the SUDs measures installed at Lamb Drove demonstrate clearly the key advantages of SUDS over traditional drainage.

4.3 In addition the partnership has links with the Green Infrastructure Partnership and the Air Quality Partnership.

4.4 The Partnership oversees the performance of the following LAA targets:

- NI 177 – Local bus passenger journeys
- NI 186 - Per capita CO2 emission in the LA area
- NI 188 – Adapting to climate change
- NI 189 - Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management
- NI 197 – Improved local biodiversity

5.0 Performance against LAA targets

5.1 The performance indicators in this area were thought to be on target at the end of the LAA's second year.

6.0 Local issues affecting performance of LAA targets

RECAP

6.1 Current and planned key joint projects and work areas being undertaken by the partnership in 2010 include:

- a) Following receipt of Green Flag status last year through the local government CAA, which identified the partnership as 'key to reducing waste in the area, the partnership is now looking to undertake a

bespoke Early Stage Advanced Partnership project, investigating how the partnership could develop even further. The project has received funding from Improvement and Efficiency South East and will provide a case study for other waste partnerships.

- b) Joint procurement of recycling banks across the partnership area, which should, by going to the market with greater tonnage/coverage achieve better value for all five participating district councils in Cambridgeshire. It could also expand the range of materials collected through recycling banks.
- c) A project investigating further potential areas of joint collaboration to achieve best value for money in the short, medium and long term is also underway. This project has so far identified for consideration, the areas of joint procurement of fuel and wheeled bins and is investigating further areas.
- d) A further project will develop a partnership-wide in-house route optimisation capability with match funding from Improvement East. This will enable round reviews in Cambridge City and Huntingdonshire over the next year and enable further individual partner and cross boundary reviews, thereby supporting the Cambridge City/South Cambs boundary review. It will ensure that collection services are the most efficient/effective in their design and can be applied to other cyclical services.
- e) A suite of joint initiatives to increase recycling and reduce waste are also being delivered in partnership working closely with community groups and the third sector and in support of national campaigns. Initiatives are receiving support from WRAP (Waste & Resources Action Programme).
- f) In terms of influencing the national agenda, the partnership has developed a response to the Coalition Governments Review of Waste Policy, to be submitted by the RECAP Board, and a response to the European Waste Directive Stage 2 consultation out of which the European Directive will be transposed into UK law.

Cambridgeshire Climate Change Partnership

- 6.2 Cambridge City Council continues to pursue opportunities for delivering the Environmental Sustainability targets in partnership wherever possible. In 2009/10 Cambridge City Council led a joint procurement with South Cambridgeshire District Council for a 2 year Climate Change Charter Practical Support project using LPSA Reward Grant funds (£60,000). This activity is now being delivered across the two districts by a consortium of local organisations involving events and online networking, an awards programme, guidance material and local case studies.

- 6.3 In 2009/10 Cambridge City Council continued to provide substantive support to the Cambridgeshire Climate Change Partnership through participation in the Local Improvement Advisor project which developed a work plan for the partnership, as well as administering the Partnership Projects Fund on behalf of the partnership.
- 6.4 Whilst Cambridge City Council successfully delivered its contribution towards NI 188 in 2009/10, achieving further performance improvement will be challenging and is dependent upon effective partnership working. Likewise, whilst the Cambridge Environment Report 2009/10 details the progress made by the City Council in reducing carbon dioxide emissions within the city, it remains impossible for these achievements to be reflected in the NI 186 performance reporting of the partnership due to the 2 year time lag associated with this indicator.

Biodiversity Partnership

- 6.5 Current and planned key joint projects and work areas being undertaken by the partnership in 2010 include:
- a) Work in 2010/11 to deliver the targets for NI197 is proceeding. The City council has confirmed financial support for this financial year.
 - b) Positive Conservation Management works on City Council owned and managed County & City Wildlife Sites have contributed to the Countywide NI197 target. Sites include Sheeps Green & Coe Fen, Hobson's Conduit & Vicars Brook.
 - c) Officers contributed to the Partnership County wide pond restoration grant bid by identifying and surveying potential ponds in the City for restoration.
 - d) Officers assisted with the concept and production of the 'Our Natural Environment 2010' report targeted at key decision makers
 - e) Officers continue to represent the City Council at Biodiversity Partnership and CPBRC Steering Groups as well as specific project group meetings.

Cambridgeshire Flood Risk Management Partnership

- 6.6 Cambridge City Council has obtained a £100,000 grant from Defra to undertake a Surface Water Management Plan (SWMP) which is being undertaken as a workstream of the Cambridgeshire Flood Risk Management Partnership. This SWMP will look at historic and potential surface water flooding within the City and propose options for the mitigation of risk where possible. It was the subject of a report to the Environment Scrutiny Committee on the 22nd June, 2010.

7. Implications

- 7.1 The LAA sets out shared priorities and agreed targets for partners across the County, including Cambridge City Council. Failure to meet these targets will have an impact on the quality of life of County residents.

Financial

- 7.2 Failure to meet all the LAA targets at the end of the 3 year period (2008/09 – 2010/11) will reduce the amount of grant awarded to Cambridgeshire Together, assuming this is allocated.

Staff

- 7.3 A number of City Council staff from all departments are working with partners to deliver the LAA.

Equal Opportunities

- 7.4 Equality and Inclusion is a key strand of the LAA

Community Safety

- 7.5 Safer and Stronger Communities is a key strand of the LAA

8. Background papers

These background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

Cambridgeshire Area Self Assessment – May 2010
Local Area Agreement, Year End Performance Report - May 2010
Proposals for a New Model of Partnership Working – May 2010
Cambridge LSP, Performance Management Report – January 2010

9. Inspection of papers

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact:

Author's Name: David Roberts
Author's Phone Number: 01223 45 7104
Author's Email: David.Roberts@cambridge.gov.uk