



Report to Cabinet

Subject Nottinghamshire Local Area Agreement

Date 16th March 2006

Author Chief Executive

Members have previously been advised of the proposal to develop a Nottinghamshire Local Area Agreement and of progress in developing such an agreement.

I attach as an appendix to this report a copy of the final version of the agreement which is due to be submitted to the government for consideration. If agreed, the document will have to be formally signed by all parties before the end of March 2006.

Reflecting the fact that District Councils are most likely in practice to be involved in the work to achieve the priorities and targets set out in the 'Safer and Stronger Communities' Block of the agreement (pages 65-80 of the document), it has been agreed that Gedling Borough Council shall take the lead role, on behalf of the Districts, in arrangements to implement this particular block from now. As Members will see, the targets set out in this block are substantially to do with crime and disorder issues (for which the District Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnerships will be responsible), the development of community, neighbourhood and voluntary work initiatives and also 'streetscene', issues such as street cleansing and quality of parks and green spaces.

The Council has played as full a role as possible in the development of the priorities and targets throughout the agreement, and, whilst the achievement of some of the 'stretch targets', such as those concerned with litter and fly tipping, will be challenging, officers are satisfied that the proposed targets are all achievable.

Members have been kept aware of concerns with regard to the government's insistence that certain funding streams previously paid direct to District Councils or District Partnerships (such as Safer & Stronger Communities Fund and Disabled Facilities Grants) be paid in future into county wide pooling arrangements under the LAA and discussions about this are continuing. The point has been made in discussions around the County that these are all funds on which Districts and District Partnerships rely in order to finance continuing

work and this is likely to be undermined if the pooling arrangement has the effect of diverting funds away from existing initiatives.

Issues about the way in which the reward grants for achieving stretch targets should be allocated, as well as the overall future governance arrangements for the agreement are likewise not fully resolved and will be the subject of discussions and agreement in the future. There are also concerns about how the Nottinghamshire Agreement and the governance structures for this can be efficiently and effectively reconciled with the emerging 'Conurbation Area Agreement' for the city conurbation area and whatever governance arrangements are proposed for that, given that there will be a significant overlap between the two in the suburban areas.

Notwithstanding the number of issues which remain outstanding, the Council is being asked to confirm its agreement to the Local Area Agreement itself. We will continue to engage positively with the negotiations which lie ahead in order to do what we can to make sure that the Gedling Borough's interests are properly protected and promoted. In the meantime, Cabinet is asked to RESOLVE to confirm its agreement to the Nottinghamshire Local Area Agreement as set out in the final draft attached and to authorise the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council to finalise the agreement and continue with negotiations on outstanding issues.