

KENSINGTON AND CHELSEA PARTNERSHIP

"LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS: SHAPING THEIR FUTURE" ODPM CONSULTATION

18th January 2006

This paper invites the Steering Group to decide whether to submit a collective response to the ODPM consultation on the future of LSPs. Should the Steering Group choose to respond to the consultation, it is also invited to agree the proposed process for preparing its response.

For Decision

1. Introduction

- 1.1 ODPM recently published *Local Strategic Partnerships: Shaping their future* - a consultation paper which examines the future role of LSPs, their governance and accountability arrangements, and their capacity to deliver Sustainable Community Strategies and Local Area Agreements (LAAs). The deadline for responses to the consultation is 22 February. A summary of the key questions and proposals in the consultation document is set out below, for information. A process for producing a response is also proposed, should the Steering Group wish to respond collectively.

2. Background: summary of consultation proposals

- 2.1 The Government's overarching vision is for LSPs to move from an advisory to a 'delivery co-ordination' role, and it is seeking to formalise this role. It sees the main aspects of LSPs' delivery co-ordination role as:

1. To be the 'partnership of partnerships' in an area, providing strategic co-ordination within the area and linking with other plans and bodies established at the regional, sub-regional and local level
2. To ensure a Sustainable Community Strategy is produced that sets the vision and priorities for the area agreed by all parties, including local citizens and businesses
3. To develop and drive the effective delivery of their Local Area Agreements
4. To agree an action plan for achieving the Sustainable Community Strategy priorities, including the LAA outcomes

- 2.2 The consultation document is relatively 'green' and seeks views on a wide range of questions as well as a number of firm proposals that underpin this vision of the LSP role. A full list of consultation questions is at annex A; key proposals include:
- a statutory duty upon key public service agencies to co-operate with the local authority in producing and implementing the Sustainable Community Strategy,

together with a statutory duty upon local authorities and named partners to involve the business, voluntary and community sectors

- potential for a requirement on bodies producing theme or service-specific plans to have regard to the Sustainable Community Strategy produced by the LSP, together with a corresponding requirement that the Sustainable Community Strategy has regard to theme or service-specific plans
- a prescribed set of steps that LSPs should take in developing the Sustainable Community Strategy, including an annual refresh and three-yearly review, and an expectation that the LAA is the 'delivery contract' (i.e. is one and the same as the Community Strategy Delivery Plan)
- a model governance structure under which LSP boards are expected to include lead representatives from the main thematic partnerships and a senior planner as core members, to reinforce LSPs' role as 'the partnership of partnerships'
- rationalisation of local partnerships, and action to make the geographic boundaries of LSP partners co-terminous, in order to enable the LSP to oversee all of the partnership activity in the local area more easily
- an extension of councillors' powers to require partners other than the local authority and health bodies to attend overview and scrutiny committees and recognise their recommendations, in order to facilitate scrutiny of the delivery of the Sustainable Community Strategy

3. Process for responding to the consultation

- 3.1 The consultation questions are wide-ranging and several raise difficult and challenging issues. The Steering Group may not wish to respond to all of the questions; and it is possible that partners may have different views on some of the issues raised. It is therefore proposed that a collective response from the KCP Steering Group would only contain statements that all members are content to endorse. Individual partners may of course wish to submit additional comments to the ODPM separately.
- 3.2 Steering Group members are invited to feed in their views on the consultation questions to which they wish to respond to Rachel Smith by 11 February. Officers will then circulate a draft composite response to the full Steering Group, with a request that partners identify any section of the response that they cannot endorse. Any such sections will be removed from the final response, which is due to be submitted by 3 March 2006 - although as set out above individual partners would be free to submit any edited sections in separate responses to ODPM.

4. Conclusion

- 4.1 The Steering Group is invited to decide whether to submit a collectively agreed response to the consultation on behalf of the KCP. Should it wish to respond to the consultation, the Steering Group is invited to agree the process outlined above as the basis for preparing its response.

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SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

The role of Local Strategic Partnerships and Sustainable Community Strategies

LSPs, Sustainable Community Strategies and LAAs

1: Do you agree that the key role of the LSP should be to develop the vision for the local area, through the Sustainable Community Strategy and the 'delivery contract' through the LAA (as set out in figures 1 & 2)

Regional/sub-regional engagement

2: We believe it is important that LSPs reflect regional/sub-regional plans where relevant in their Sustainable Community Strategy priorities and that regional organisations and partnerships take account of key local needs. How can this greater co-ordination best be facilitated?

Links to local plans

3: Would a requirement on bodies producing theme or service-based plans to 'have regard' to the Sustainable Community Strategy in doing so and vice versa, increase the LSP's ability to take the over-arching view in an area?

Sustainable Community Strategies

4: Are the proposed steps in the development of a Sustainable Community Strategy correct? (See box on page 18)

5: What more could be done to ensure Sustainable Community Strategies are better able to make the links between social, economic and environmental goals and to deal more effectively with the area's cross-boundary and longer-term impacts?

Neighbourhood Engagement

6: What should be the role of the LSP in supporting neighbourhood engagement and ensuring the neighbourhood/parish voice, including diverse and minority communities, is heard at the principal local level?

7: In two-tier areas, is it most appropriate for the responsibility for neighbourhood engagement to rest with the district level LSP?

Links with Local Development Framework

8: How can spatial planning teams best contribute to Sustainable Community Strategies through the LSP and ensure that LDFs and Sustainable Community Strategies are closely linked?

9: How could revised guidance and accompanying support materials best ensure that Sustainable Community Strategies and Local Development Frameworks join up effectively?

Two-tier areas

10: Should every local authority area have its own LSP?

11: Would the establishment of a greater delineation of roles between county and district LSPs as suggested be sensible? (See paras 65 to 69)

Governance

LSP as the partnership of partnerships

12: We believe that it is important that the LSP is made up of the thematic partnerships in the area together with an LSP board. What is your view?

13: We believe that a rationalisation of local partnerships would help the LSP executive take an effective overview. Would clustering partnerships around the four LAA blocks be a sensible way to achieve this?

14: We believe that the geographic boundaries of partners within LSPs is important. What do you see as the opportunities for, and barriers to, co-terminosity shared geographic boundaries?

15: Within the LSP framework and its established priorities, would the creation of single delivery vehicles to tackle particular issues be helpful?

Ensuring wide representation

16: How can the neighbourhood and parish, tiers be involved most effectively on the LSP on a) the executive and b) individual thematic partnerships?

17: How can the private, voluntary and community sectors be involved most effectively on the LSP as a) the executive and b) individual thematic partnerships?

Providing a legislative foundation

18: Would a duty to co-operate with the local authority, in producing and implementing the Community Strategy, help to set LSPs on a firmer footing and better enable their enhanced delivery co-ordination role?

19: If so, what obligations, such as attendance, financial or staff support, would be useful to place on partners?

20: If so, which public sector agencies would the duty be most sensibly placed on?

21: Should there be a statutory duty on local authorities and named partners to promote the engagement of the voluntary and community sectors in the LSP?

Accountability

Accountability between partners

22: Should each partnership be encouraged to produce protocols or 'partnership agreements' between partners to ensure clear lines of accountability for the delivery of agreed outcomes?

23: We believe that if partnership working was included as part of other key agencies' assessments it would be effective in securing greater commitment from other public sector agencies. What are your views?

Involvement of local councillors

24: What do you see as the key role for executive councillors within LSPs?

25: What do you see as the appropriate role for backbenchers particularly in ensuring a high quality of local engagement?

26: What would make councillors' powers of overview and scrutiny more effective in scrutinising the 4 blocks of the LAA?

Involvement of Members of Parliament

27: What would be the most appropriate way for a Member of Parliament to be involved with the LSP and how can we ensure that it is complementary to the role of local councillors?

Involvement of Communities Served

28: How can we promote effective community engagement and involvement, from all sections of the community in shaping local priorities and public services?

29: How can we maximise the opportunities for joint policy and joint activity on community engagement, including the LDF, the LAA and the Sustainable Community Strategy?

30: How can accountability to local people and businesses be enhanced?

Capacity Issues

31: What are your LSP's key support/skill gaps?

32: What extra or different support would be most helpful in shifting to a more delivery focused role?

33: How would LSPs prefer to receive information and support; through guidance, toolkits, sign-posting to existing information, practical learning opportunities etc?

34: How can LSPs ensure that adequate learning and support provision is available to build the capacity of communities to engage with the LSP and its partners at the various levels?

35: What learning or development do you feel is required by LSPs in order to deliver sustainable communities that embody the principles of sustainable development at the local level?